

HELLO! my name
IS...

Rancid-News

Q AND NOT U ★ THE (INTERNATIONAL) NOISE CONSPIRACY
★ GRABASS CHARLESTONS ★ NO COMPLY ★ 56A INFOSHOP ★
THExBREAKxIN ★ KILL THE LIGHTS ★ MOST PRECIOUS
BLOOD ★ CHILLERTON ★ JERRY VLASAK ★ BREAK IT UP
★ ON THIN ICE ★ DAS OATH ★ RNC REPORT ★ PUNKVOTER
PLUS ARTICLES ON ANIMAL LIBERATION
REVIEWS ★ COLUMNS ★ STORIES



Rançid

INTERVIEWS:

most precious blood:...

Das ^{p.14} ^{p.18} ^{p.28} ^{p.206} ^{p.10}

Oath... the break in

q & not u... ^{p.84}

on thin ^{p.22} 560

ice ^{p.26}

No Comply

chillerton ^{p.20}

kill the lights ^{p.29} international

break it up ^{p.53} ^{p.87} noise con.

grabass ^{p.30} charlestons ^{p.40}

someone IAR

COLUMNS: P.86

RECORD REVIEWS: P.104

ZINE/ COMIC/ BOOK REVIEWS

MOVIE REVIEWS: P.112



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RANÇID NEWS

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6 issues - £8

We've had to put the subscription rate up because of the weight of the zine. Subscriptions really help us out, if you like the zine then get a sub, its the best way to show us appreciation. Subs start #9.

Contribute

We need interviews. We need articles. We need comics. We need art-work. We need poems (so long as they're good and not about drum circles). We need photos. We need thoughts. We need ideas. RN doesn't magically appear out of nowhere, and we need help producing it.

Next Issue

Lots of bands we haven't told they're getting interviewed yet, and a couple we have. It may be another themed issue, but you shall all have to wait and see. It's coming out the last week of January '05 & will have 116 pages again. It'll be awesome. Promise.

Ad Rates

1/6 page = £12/ \$20/ 20euro *** 1/4 page = £20/ \$35/ 35euro

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more always wanted. send us your words, pictures, ideas.

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First off apologies for how long this has taken to come out. It was originally put in the diary to come out in the middle of September. Chances are you're reading this two months later. Sorry we fucked up. It was partly the problem of getting a print slot, but it was equally just us being crap. Sorry. It's not going to happen again - honest 'guv. The next issue's going to be coming out at the end of January 2005, and then there'll be strict two month gaps after that and the next one coming out. A lot of zines promise this, and the status quo seems to be for the deadline for the most part to just be ignored, but we're gonna try really fucking hard not to be like that, and make sure that we keep our shit together.

We need some serious help to do that though. At the moment there's about five of us doing everything (interviews, reviews, photos, art etc), and most of the commitment (layout, sorting out ads) and work lies with two of us. If this is going to continue then we need people to help out. If you like a band or are inspired by a person then go and interview them, don't whinge that we didn't interview them, go and do it yourself. We're not gonna print interviews with bands who want to suck corporate cock, are sexist, racist and blah. Pretty much everything else is gonna be printed, as long as it's interesting. We always need photos. We need photos to go with the band interviews and articles. In fairness getting hold of photos is proving slightly easier than it used to, but all the same we still need help getting photos for activist/ protest articles. It'd be cool if we could have more original art in here. If you enjoy reading this then contribute.

Equally important if you like this is to help us distro it. Thanks to a few of the people who work on Rancid News heading out to uni we've suddenly become slightly more national in our outlook, but all the same we still really need help getting these to towns and cities across the country. If you can help out that'd be awesome! Email edd@rmzine.co.uk if you can help.

So anyhow issue 7 wasn't the greatest success ever. We eventually got through most of them (we've got like 200 left), but

that was largely thanks to the fact that it was out for several months rather than just two. I don't know why it didn't sell so well. I think it was largely because we were all involved in the In Arms Reach squat which took up a lot of our time and energy, and we kind of putting all our eggs into one basket with regards to Reading. In 2003 we sold shit loads of fanzines at Reading. 2004 nobody fucking cared. It wasn't helped by the fact that this year at Reading the security, and staff were really obnoxious, and nor was it helped by the fact that we got caught in the middle of them cracking down on ticket touts (no bad thing!). The end story though was that we didn't sell nearly as many fanzines as we took down with us. Oh well Reading was still fun, especially telling the people with their 'Show us your breasts and we'll give you beer' sign how much they sucked.

Other than that not a whole lot has happened in the world of Rancid News. We still think the name sucks, and really want to change it, but finding a name that's actually good is proving to be a mighty task. Anyone who's got suggestions should email us for sure. We moved 'office' recently - or at least the computer moved from Stoke Newington to Camden. Actually in fairness we have a new computer too, so the 'office' has doubled it's capacity. Hopefully this will be a permanent base. Moving four times in one year definitely didn't help the productivity of the zine, and once we were settled in one place for a decent period of time - despite it being a hovel - we did manage to get zines out on a pretty regular basis. Hopefully that'll happen again now.

So lastly we've changed the layout slightly. Not as much as we want - because we didn't really have the time - but it's been changed slightly. It'll change a bit more drastically for issue 9 and will hopefully start looking like a slightly more complete thing rather than a whole load of interviews next to each other, with some CD/ LP reviews sandwiched in at the end.

Anyhow, hope you enjoy this issue!

We are not nuggets!



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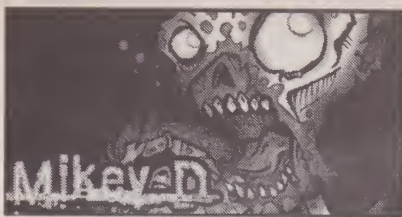
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So here I am. Gap year over, stuff for uni prepared and now its only a matter of time until I'm off towards Brighton...

Don't worry this isn't gonna be a column about "I'm going to uni, I'm scared, ragh, etc zz", this is a column about a tension and unhappiness I've felt within myself and my life for roughly a month now...

Interrailing through Europe at the beginning of the summer was an amazing experience, bar none. It gave me the chance to hang out and rock with some of my best friends who I haven't seen as much of as I'd like to due to them going to uni and what not. Went to Fury fest in le mans and did some other pretty crazy/fun/inspiring/rad shit along the way. As well as allowing me some much needed party time, the 6 hour plus train journeys gave me time to think about the past year. Sitting, looking out the window with my headphones on, watching the landscape transform and thinking about the experiences and memories of the friendships and relationships I'd formed this year ...of course there were regrets, but also some great memories.

The variety of amazing places we visited and cool people we hung out with re-sparked my passion for life and what I was doing with it...I made commitments to myself that when I got home I'd restart my zine, give up TV, read more books and try and do something creative or productive every day...to basically just make the most of living. Time is far too precious a commodity to waste...

And what happened when I got back? Nothing. All those commitments I'd made? Nothing. I'd wake up late and spend hours in front of the TV, feeling sickened and repulsed by the shit it was spewing at me, feeling alienated and embittered by all the adverts and music videos telling me what I should aspire to look like, the list goes on and on. Yet I couldn't switch the fucking thing off...What was wrong with me? The passion and interest I'd had in politics and social issues warped into a consuming bitterness at the state of the world and those who lived in it, yet I was still too fucking lazy to get up and try and do something about it.

I felt like crap basically. I tried to take my mind off these failings by going out for drinks with old school friends, but to be honest, this made me feel worse...I was constantly rushing to and fro trying to meet up with people and exhausting myself. Once I arrived, I wouldn't be the only one and find that after the regular pleasantries and "what-have-you-been-up-to's?" I didn't have that much in common with them. Which is sad, its really fucking sad, but its true...I always

knew my interests lied elsewhere, and these just confirmed them. Yet these were still my friends, I couldn't just stop and break away, we'd been through a lot together...

This summer the In Arms Reach collective squatted a building in central London and hosted gigs, film nights, discussions as well as just being a cool place to hang out with like minded people, and talk about music and things like consumerism and direction action...All things I was interested in, and I had a chance to really involve myself in it and help out...but I didn't. Instead I was still running around, not sure where I was going, only coming to the squat for a few hours at a time and generally feeling that I wasn't contributing much. The only explanation I can offer now (with the beauty of hind-sight) was that I still felt obliged to spend time with my other friends and family, even though I knew inside what I really wanted to do...I was torn and felt guilty towards my friends in the squat, but again worried that I wasn't "there" for my friends and family.

I realised now that I was spreading myself too thin. You can never have too many friends, and I'm truly lucky to have so many, but finding the time to see them all is getting more and more difficult. Also, with university coming up, there's going to be the chance to make new friends and meet new people, all of which will put strain on staying in contact with those back home...

Saying goodbye is hard, but its time now to face up to the fact this isn't a "phase", this isn't something I'm going to grow out of. My interest and passion lies with the music I love, and the ideas expressed in that music about the world and what's happening to it...and if I'm truly to be happy, I want to spend as much time doing things based around this passion, and with people who share and understand it, rather than those who feel obliged to see me simply because I'm an old friend.

As a conclusion, this is kinda hard, because I'm not advocating abandoning your old friends and family, but at the same time there are only so many people you can stay in contact with (I'm gonna contradict myself here, I know I am) and you can't live your life simply "being" there for other people, sometimes you need to be selfish and really do things for yourself...and more often than not this will involve other people anyway. So yeah, that's the crux of it really, I love and care about my family and friends very much, but this is my life, and I want it back from all those who are destroying the world, who are infesting it with hate and who are hurting others for fake plastic ideas which are immersed everywhere and yet are nothing but shit. I want to do this, and I want to do it with people who understand my uneasiness and who want to express their frustration and anger in a number of different ways...

Take it easy

End notes:

1. Anyone and everyone involved in In Arms Reach, thank you, you did something

amazingly expressive and fucking inspiring.
2. If you don't own it, buy the "slow riot for zero kanda" ep by "godspeed you black emperor!"...I hadn't listened to it in a while and have been completely reminded about how amazingly powerful and sad it is.
3. I've recently turned veggie, so if anyone has any interesting recipes, please email me! PhatMikeyD@hotmail.com



isy
morgenmuffel

I'm just sat in the Cash and Carry car park with a trolley load of mostly chopped tomato tins, waiting for my lift (this load didn't fit in the rather small Landrover we drove here with). We're cooking for a gathering of 300 people this weekend, with our volunteer collective mobile kitchen, the Anarchist Teapot, and my mind's all over the place cos we're leaving for some good ol' travelling in two weeks. My friend and me are going on an ambitious entirely overland trip to South Korea for three months. I'm excited - I haven't been away 'properly' for years, and I'm also constantly trying to tie up loose ends before I go - like this column! And I'm nervous in a completely unnecessary way, about leaving our local libertarian social centre, the Cowley Club, for three whole months! Guess I should explain a bit about our centre. It's co-operatively owned and run, and has a vegan, cheap café open 4 days a week with an anarchist, feminist and ecological bookshop, a members' bar every night, and it also hosts a whole range of other services and events and meetings, and is a base for a bunch of groups and campaigns. It's run entirely by volunteers, and encourages participation and co-operation.

So, in theory, I shouldn't worry. The place is based on collective responsibility, and no one person should be vital to it. And I really, really should do this - go away, not feel like it's all up to me. I'm terrible for that: I pick up any possibly neglected job I think needs doing, and take charge of things against my principles. But whoa, what if there's a food hygiene inspection? People keep on putting things on the kitchen floor! Or what if the people doing the accounts now forget to add the VAT and we end up paying too much on our next return? Or, what if no one takes over my cooking shift and we're shut every Thursday and.... See, this is very silly and I'm being pedantic and I need to let it go. It'll be fine.

I'll change the subject from my fretting to something that's recently, finally awoken my interest: gardening! See, I'm no child of the country so I have, as most people in Western civilisation, not had any sort of connection to any food I eat for most of my life. How ridiculous is that? Every other creature on this planet sorts out its food

supply directly. Only humans do this weird thing of industrialised food production and consumption through processing and supermarkets. I mean, supermarkets are Fucked Up. Look at all the packaging waste, waste of resources from random transportation from one place to the other, pollution from processing factories, and the enriching of all sorts of wanker distributors and corporations along the way – when we could be collecting or growing what we need on our doorstep. Fucked Up. I know I'm being simplistic, not to mention assuming a lot; just how many people even just in the UK could afford the cost and space of a food producing garden even if held in common? But the processes around food production and consumption are just so amazingly far removed from what I feel we should be doing. I also would be so happy spending most of my day gathering or growing and prepping my own food, baking bread, making jam, pressing juices... aaahhh... except I'd probably be drinking turnip juice here in Sussex. Anyway, there were some unrealistic musings for you.

Another change of subject to Prisoner News. The 2001 EU Summit was held in Gothenburg in Sweden, and of course saw protests and a lot of clashes with the police. Now, three years on, a Dutch activist, Maarten Blok, was arrested in Holland and handed over to the Swedish authorities for his alleged participation in the protests. He was originally arrested in a mass arrest at a school people were sleeping in and deported; finding out later that he was being fitted up on charges relating to assaulting the police. He is currently being held on remand, with a trial date set for the 23rd September, and supporters are planning a demonstration on that day, as well as urging people to write letters of support (preferably in English): **Maarten Blok, Häktet, Box 216, 40123 Göteborg, Sweden**, check out the website too: <http://www.steunmaarten.org>

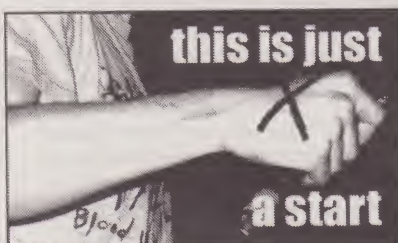
Another prisoner currently awaiting trial on construed charges is Billy Cottrell in the USA. He's a 23 year old Caltech PhD student arrested in March 2004 accused of being a ringleader in a series of Earth Liberation front arsons. He has just had new charges laid against him of the alleged use of 'a destructive device during a violent crime' and is being threatened with life in prison without the possibility of parole, if convicted of all charges. He is refusing to co-operate or grass on others despite these threats and deserves our support in this. Check out the website <http://www.freebillycottrell.org> for ways to help (and if you understand any kind of advanced physics like string theory – whatever that is – help him recreate his library and stay involved in his studies by sending him reading material!), and write to him: **William Cottrell, #29526112, Metropolitan Detention Center, PO Box 1500, Los Angeles, CA 90053, USA**.

Hey I managed to get away from the car park in the end, after lots of men in white vans interrupting my writing – and now I'm

in the Cowley Club enjoying a pint – my next column will hopefully contain tales of foreign lands, Russian punks, death by cold in Siberia in winter, and trains – well, we'll see, huh?

Things I'm currently obsessed with: line dancing (I can do 6 dances now and they're all called things like The Honky Tonk Stomp), Kid Dynamite, a certain bottled salad dressing from Asda, pulling up bindweed, Gin and tonic, Lynx Premium lager, 'Rooftops' by Hot Water Music, The Staple Singers, Mah Jongg computer games, Aretha Franklin, Bikini Kill, making lists...

katchoo63@yahoo.co.uk



This is my first column for Rancid News – the point of this is to be a round up of news relating to fast / old school / straight edge hardcore, mainly UK related but also some highlights from Europe and USA. After Rancid News interviewed and reviewed Fifty On Red, and my zine Courage to Care was reviewed I got quite a few demo / zine orders. I kinda realised there was a need for this kind of column. I spoke to Edd and no-one else had offered so figured I should take it on. I've included as much contact information as possible for everything I've mentioned to make things as easy as possible for you. If anything you read here is of interest to you, you'd like a mix tape to hear some of these bands or you need more info, please just drop me a line and I'll do what I can. E-mail: xiampetex@hotmail.com. Post: 9 Belper Road, West Hallam, Ilkeston, Derbyshire, DE7 6GY.

I'll start with some tour news, the past few months have seen some awesome shows from Mental and The First Step, and we have more rad bands coming over in the next few months. First Up are **Internal Affairs**, Troy of Burial Records / Deny Everything fame has booked the hardest working band in hardcore to visit the UK at the end of October to coincide with Ninjafest. After being fortunate enough to see them at CBGBs in New York earlier this year I can tell you all we're definitely going to be in for a treat, they play fucking fast pissed off hardcore with one of the most intense front men I've ever seen. They recently put a discography out on Malfunxion called 'This Is for you.....'. Check it out and then come to one of these shows: October 24th London, 25th Middlesbrough, 26th Liverpool, 27th Sheffield, 28th Leicester. **Ninjafest** - This years Ninjafest is booked for the 23rd and 24th October at The Underworld in London again. I only made it on the Sunday last year but had an awesome time. The Last Chance set was one of the best I ever saw them

play, plus Uppercut, Damage Control and Amendment 18 all played great sets. Kids turned out from all over the country so the atmosphere was pretty awesome. The line up is kinda varied this year with 'something for everyone' (translation: plenty of time to get food while tough bands play). There are more foreign bands than UK ones playing which seems odd for a UK festival, but anyway highlights for me are: Internal Affairs, Harsh Truth, Dead Stop, Break It Up, Attitude Adjustment, Justice, Nothing Done, On Thin Ice and This Time Around. Last year there were a load of new zines especially for the occasion and I expect the same will happen this year. **Black Friday 29** - One of my favourite old school bands from the European Mainland at the moment are coming over to the UK for a third time early October to promote the LP they have coming out on Dead and Gone. I caught shows on the last two tours and they're buzzing with energy live and are a band I'm definitely looking forward to seeing again. Dates: September 30th Canterbury October 1st Sheffield (LP Release show), October 2nd Middlesbrough, October 3rd London. Check the Dead and Gone Records messageboard for information and updates on all of these, link below in the labels section.

Zines - Hopefully since you've picked up Rancid News you have an interest in zines already. If you're interested in picking up more that cover purely the more hardcore side of things, then check out the following, they're all recommended. **Murder Contest #3** - Often referred to as the best UK zine and I'd be hard pushed to argue with that – this issue has interviews with Seconds Out, Walk the Plank, Alex MacKaye, Dead Stop plus a Knife Fight / Annihilation Time tour diary and the usual reviews / opinions etc. Thick zine, great quality print – fucking essential basically. £2 ppp. murdercontestzine@hotmail.com.

Courage To Care #4 - This is slightly self promotion as I'm involved with Courage to Care but my friend Katie put this issue together entirely herself - in depth interviews with Dead Stop, Fifty On Red, Walk The Plank as well as interviews with loads of labels. Some rants and photos. £2ppd kitty_core@hotmail.com. **My True Love #1** By the time you read this, Sagar may have sold out of copies of these but you should drop him a line and get him to print more up as this is the best new zine I've read for a while. Excellent almost piss take interviews with Terror, The Break In as well as articles on veganism and why Nike is so bad. Awesome to see such a young kid not being worried to air his views, a total breath of fresh air. £2 ppp. notforxme@hotmail.com.

Step Outside #1 - Another new zine, this time from Canterbury. Bill put this together - has interviews with Seconds Out, Bases Loaded and Murder Weapon. A lot of time has gone into getting the lay out just right. By the time you read this a new issue will be in progress so get in touch with him and get one ordered. burnt_out_night_alone@hotmail.com. **The Box #5** - Russ from Biff Tannen / Bases Loaded also squeezed time into his busy

schedule to put this together. The interviews in here were all done on msn and it gives it a feel of just Russ chatting with his mates including Pid from the Legacy – gives them a pretty original feel. Some reviews too of all kinds of random records. Only 50p. info@redcrayonrecords.co.uk

Label News - Dead and Gone - The main UK label to watch at the moment since they're putting out a steady supply of excellent releases. Dead and Gone have just put out one of my top 10 records of the year - the Justice 'Look Alive' EP, and in a few months have the Black Friday 29 LP and Break It Up EP coming out. Towards the end of the year Ian is re-pressing the Damage Control "What It Takes" LP for Europe, as well as putting out a new Legacy EP and a Fifty On Red EP. For those who haven't heard of any of these bands and may be interested in checking out some releases, here are some brief descriptions: Black Friday 29 – Fast hard old school from Germany. Break it Up – Melodic youth crew from the North East of England. Justice – sound a lot like Mental and would fit in nicely on the Lockin Out roster. Damage Control - from Norway, play very melodic hardcore ala early Dag Nasty. The Legacy - melodic hardcore, the new songs sound a progression from the earlier material, having an almost Modern Life Is War feel to them. Fifty On Red - short fast hardcore, the new songs have a harder vibe than the demo – comparable to latter era Carry On. Also, as mentioned earlier if you can cut through the shit talking and in jokes, the Dead and Gone messageboard is highly recommended as a resource to check for upcoming shows / news on releases. <http://www.deadandgone.co.uk>. **Speedowax** - Based in Birmingham, Rich at Speedowax is putting out a re-press of the almost out of print Legacy CDEP onto a 7", hopefully out by September. Plans for next year include a split 7" by 2 of my favourite bands from the South Coast - Abandon Ship and The Permanent. Both these guys play fast screamy hardcore and are both amazing live. There's also a Fifty On Red / Face Up split 7" in the works once we've recorded our EP - info on Face Up below. Check out <http://www.speedowax.com> or if you get the chance, pop into Tempest records in Birmingham which is also run by the same dude. There's always plenty of decent new records in stock. Rich deserves our support for committing to vinyl only releases. **New UK Demos - Bases Loaded** - 3 of the 4 Medic dudes have put together a new band with a guy who looks like a banana, and Russ from Biff Tannen. Lockin Out / Early New York vibe, lyrics about baseball and some rad dance parts makes for one of the better demos I've picked up lately. They still have tapes left and had some shirts on The First Step dates last week. basesloadedhc@hotmail.com. **What Hope Remains** - Passionate Melodic hardcore from the North East with some rad break downs and awesome sing alongs. The demo is sold out now, but there's a 7" out as the first release on Courage To Care records sometime at the end of this year. www.whathoperemains.com. **Face Up** -

Probably the band I'm most excited about in the UK at the moment. They formed after Turn Your Back and On The Attack from Peterborough both broke up. The first wave of songs they've written are fast hardcore with pretty retarded lyrics. Demo is being recorded mid September, the practice tape I heard totally impressed me. rapexandxpillage@hotmail.com. **Recommended listening / awesome new shit from Europe / US. Iron Boots** – Everyone's raving about these guys at the moment as the demo basically sounds like a lost Warzone recording. The demo tape is sold out but will be re-pressed onto CD by Walk All Night, along with 8 new songs. www.walkallnight.com. **Blacklisted** – Missing American Nightmare / Give Up The Ghost? Then get into this, they're harder than AN but have the same kinda vibe and lyrics. <http://www.stillbornrecords.com>. **Dead Stop** – This will be in everyone's 'Top 5' at the end of the year, the most essential European hardcore record ever? Fast snotty hardcore punk, the LP just went into a second press and you should track one down before they sell out. www.completecontrol.tk. **Righteous Jams** – Straight up hardcore with some sweet breakdowns to wreck your room to. These guys have their demo pressed onto vinyl by Anger Management Records in Belgium – www.am-records.com. The 'Rage of Discipline' LP on Lockin Out is sold out already after a month or something crazy, but will be pressed onto CD soon by Chad from New Found Glory on his new label – sounds almost too bizarre to be true. www.lockinout.com. **Our Turn** "Demo" and "Catch Your Breath" – Totally fast posi youth crew vibe, I'd actually take these guys over The First Step at the moment, the best band playing this genre at the moment. 7" and the Demo are being pressed onto CD by Youngblood Records - www.youngblood-records.com.

Listening to: Internal Affairs "This is For You..." CD (Malfunction), Justice 'Look Alive + Demo' CDEP (Dead and Gone), Lights Out 'Get Out' 7" and Our Turn 'Catch Your Breath' 7" (Youngblood), Blacklisted 'Our Youth Is Wasted' EP (Walk All Night), Mental 'Yo' 7" (Lockin' Out) and the Bases Loaded, What Hope Remains, Face Up (practice recording) and Break It Up demos.



I cop a lot of shit for my politics y'know. The vast majority of people who discover my politics think I'm either gay, crazy or attention seeking, usually all of the above. A lot of people think I'm very stupid, very misguided and I'll probably shoot up a high school sometime soon (or at least shoot heroin). Hopefully, if you're buying this fanzine, you'll be at least a fraction more enlightened than that. However, there's one

argument I come across more or less every time my politics are "uncovered", and that is the one concerning "consumer politics".

I've heard it said more often than I've heard Blair talk about those damn weapons of mass destruction that I'm a poseur ("armchair", if you will) anarchist, cos I (or my family) own a PC, Converse shoes (owned by Nike, dontcha know), and cos I practically explode with excitement whenever Paramount Comedy deigns to show "Happy Days" (you saying you never wanted to be the Fonz?? Really??). Apparently it's hypocritical for an anarchist to eat at McDonalds, have a Starbucks coffee, buy a pair of Nike Dunks (incidentally, I don't do any of these things, but that's irrelevant). Apparently, a "real" anarchist would reject all the more blatant aspects of Western/capitalist/bourgeois culture and only buy/enjoy products that which are in line with their ethics and politics.

The odd thing about this argument that it isn't usually posed from a strategic standpoint (i.e. boycotting the product in order to attain an end, such as decrease the company's profits or weaken their power), but an ethical one (that an anarchist buying Nike is *hypocritical*), which to me seems to demonstrate a basic lack of comprehension of anarchism. Y'see, anarchists (and supposedly anyone on the far left) believe that **ALL CAPITALISM = EXPLOITATION**. Unlike Naomi Klein and her liberal reformist ilk, who believe that Nike's sweatshops and Starbucks' maltreatment of employees are anomalies of capitalism (or even just globalisation), which can be ironed out without too much fuss, we call for the complete overhaul of capitalism, from Microsoft to the local newsagents. Of course, IBM, Shell etc operate on a totally different scale to your corner shop, but both are still operating under the capitalism system, ergo, both are unethical. For the same reason we don't really differentiate between Bush and Kerry, Blair and Howard or UKIP and the BNP.

The standard reply I receive to this argument is: "fine, you believe that all capitalism is exploitation, so escape it. Go and live in a forest, eat fruit that falls off trees, wear vine leaves etc etc. Otherwise you aren't a *real* anarchist". Some kinda self-indulgent smugness that I can (temporarily) hide from the capitalist beast?? Besides, the forest is probably owned by a huge corporation who would have me arrested for eating their apples. Failing that, I'm sure the forest would be bulldozed in time to make way for the constant advance of capitalism e.g. *another* golf course, *another* out of town shopping centre, etc, etc. And aren't there various laws against nudity??

Wouldn't my time be better spent fighting for what I believe in?? Wouldn't it be more "anarchist" of me to work towards, well, anarchism?? An individual not eating at McDonalds doesn't further a movement. (In fact, it often results in many people thinking

that they've "done their part" by boycotting and encourage others to boycott certain places in the hope that they will "reform", but I'm not criticising those who boycott products *through choice* and alongside *actual* activism - its those who believe that boycotts are either necessary or sufficient that irk me.) I also constantly find myself defending people and groups (such as CrimethInc) who actually *have* largely succeeded in escaping capitalism, but I'll cover that in the next "slow news" issue (haha).

Back to the point though, reformism is tantamount to a refusal to confront the issue. Why should we beg big corporations to give their employees a "living wage" when they shouldn't have to work for the bastards in the first place?? Sweatshops (and the maltreatment of those in the fast food/coffee franchise industry/any other "publicised" labour injustice) represent the true nature of capitalism. They're only different to a European (or "Western") office job in that the level of exploitation is greater and more blatant. Believe me, given the opportunity, your employer would treat you the same as the (tragic) horror stories that drift over from the "developing world's" workplaces. The actions depicted by Klein and others by large corporations towards their employees are symptomatic of a money-driven society, the natural result of a "profit over people" mentality. Removing the most obvious and audacious cases of exploitation is not removing the problem. The solution is confronting the issue at its root: that is, destroying capitalism.

If you think that what McDonalds et al (cos they're all the same when it comes down to it) is doing in the Third World and how they treat their employees and all the rest sucks then don't just not avoid Happy Meals, fuckin' do something about it. Join a local group if there is one, or even better, fuckin' start one yourself. Of course, you don't have to stop there. There are plenty of courses of action you can take (check #6 for examples of these) that would actually have an effect. Don't sit about not eating McDonalds like you're bringing down capitalism though, cos you aren't.

END NOTES:

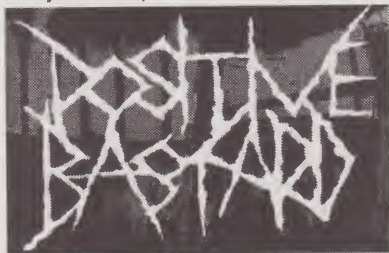
- #1 Check out www.nologo.org for more about Naomi Klein, or her book "No Logo" (and to a lesser extent, "Fences and Windows"). Oddly enough, despite her horribly reformist stance on most issues, Klein agrees with me on this one.
- #2 Contrary to Edd's transcription, I never claimed that Cut the Shit were on Equal Vision. Yeah, so I thought EVR were based in Boston, fuckin' sue me (check #7 to understand what I'm talking about).
- #3 New Converge is awesome until the last couple of tracks. "Eagles Become Vultures" is the musical equivalent of those hugeass storms that happen on Jupiter.
- #4 This article was written with the musical aid of Dead Prez, Internal Affairs, DYS, Rise Against and Sage Francis.

STOP PRESS: ALAN CALLS OUT RANCID NEWS

Ok I'm really digging this whole "DIY NOT EMI!" that was going down in #7. DIY is cool as fuck, and it's awesome that RN is both documenting and expounding on it. However, what the fuck was all that about in the touring article last time round??

*"If you have an agent booking your gigs with contracts etc and at the end of the night you're having problems with getting paid then just refer them back to the contract and if needs be, to your agent. **YOUR AGENT CAN THEN THREATEN LEGAL ACTION IF NECESSARY** or just boycott the promoter until he/she pays up..."*

Now I'm no expert on the origins of DIY in hardcore punk rock, but I'm pretty sure I'm right in saying that DIY does not stand for Get Your Agent To Sue When You Can. Since when did DIY involve contracts and lawyers?? In fact, fuck it, since when did Doing It Yourself mean employing a fucking agent?? DIY is about handshakes, not signatures. If some guy in Afghanistan says they'll pay your post-empunkcore troupe X thousand pounds to defecate onstage for 6.5 minutes, then DIY is trusting that they will. I don't know who Dan 5K is, and frankly I don't care, but *please*, if you're interested in DIY touring is about, then *completely disregard* the above paragraph. In the DIY scene, you trust someone on their word. It really is as simple as that.



Hello readers. By the time you read this summer will be almost over. Let me get all English on you, and start off by talking about the weather. Hasn't this summer been so unpredictable in terms of the weather? It can rain for four days solid, causing flooding in some areas and then a few days later we are witnessing record temperatures around the country. It is apparent that our (western) patterns of consumption are really having a serious effect upon our environment. Although global warming can't fully explain the rise in freak weather conditions, it is clear that it is the catalyst to it. It will most likely get worse before it gets any better, but hopefully it won't be too late till the powers that be realise that we are heading towards global annihilation, unless we radically change our way of life.

On a personal level, this summer had been amazing. After graduating from university with a 2:1 in Sociology, I am finally at the stage where I can really start doing what I want. I have organised a tour for Same Day Service from the USA and Shotgun Democracy, which was lots of fun and a success. I have been going to see lots of great bands (namely Tragedy, Narcosis,

Holier Than Thou, I Adapt, Fighting Shit, and Pilger), and played in the national punk rock football tournament. One of the highlights of the summer so far was going to Iceland with Patient Zero. 10 boys, 6 days, plenty of alcohol, Icelandic maidens and 2 gigs of thrash lunacy, fantastic! I have just got back from a small tour with Fun from Finland followed by the Out of Spite weekend in Leeds. So I sit here in the library typing up this column for Rancid-News, 2 days before I head to Finland to see the Out Cold / Hero Dishonest tour, visiting friends and seeing more bands. Upon my return I will (hopefully) be heading on tour with Hero Dishonest around the UK. Check them out if you get the chance. So, as you can see, summer is a very busy and active time for me at the moment, and I wouldn't have it any other way. I hate sitting around and doing nothing, apart from every once in a while. Well, that's enough self-indulgence for now, here is my main article, which is the culmination of a discussion I had with the band Fun, whilst on the way back from a NOFX gig in Sweden.

Wanking on Tour

Many of you reading this may have been on tour, whether it is in or with a band, or whether it be going travelling with some friends. If not, I imagine you will have some ideas of what touring involves. On tour, you are constantly around the people you are travelling with and it certainly takes a strain on friendships. This is especially the case if one hasn't had chance to relieve themselves for a while, as tensions get higher the longer you leave it. What follows is a rough guide to the best opportunities for having a five knuckle shuffle or poking your fingers in the sea, whilst on the road.

Perhaps the best and most obvious way to get some relief on tour is by bringing your partner on tour. You would get guaranteed action every night, but having a partner on tour would doom your relationship unless you were ultra serious. Second to this plan, is actually getting lucky at the gig you are at / city you are playing in. This can happen occasionally, but usually to band members, or if you've got the confidence. If you can only manage to get some action in the venue toilets, don't get your mates to film it and post the video on the internet, like some wankers in a band did on the punktastic forum. Have some fucking respect for the other sex. Also being on tour, and going back to someone's house, one can avoid morning after awkwardness by simply applying the "I have to get to the next gig now" card. Generally for most of us lonely folk, it doesn't happen though. The best plan around all this is to have a designated fucking partner in every place you visit, thus ensuring comfortable and hassle-free relief on tour. You are onto a winner there.

If you're at the venue, and you are desperate for relief, there are always the venue toilets. This is quite a desperate and dirty measure, and shouldn't be attempted if you can't face washing your lower regions in a public sink, or walking round with a crusty lower region

for the rest of the night. The plus side is you can think about the beautiful person you just seen on the dance floor, whilst engaging in some personal pleasure. Probably best to stick to service stations though.

If you are on tour with a band, you will probably driving round in a van. Sometimes people sleep in the van at night, as to guard the contents of the van. It can be a harsh thing having to sleep in a cold van for the night, but can provide an ample opportunity for some private masturbation. Make sure you be careful not to jizz all over other peoples equipment though. However one must be careful of others if attempting to relieve your 'tour balls' in the van. A friend of mine who plays in a band named after a Clash song, made a mistake of not checking for others around the van, and was busted by other band members, fully in the act of monkey bashing.

Generally if you are on a DIY tour, you will probably stay at the promoters' house or one of their friends' houses. This can be applied to staying with friends whilst travelling. In the bathroom or shower at the promoters' house is an ample opportunity to let the juices fly, the best opportunity being during a shower. However this raises many ethical issues. Would you feel guilty for committing such a dirty but natural act in the house of someone who has so kindly cooked for you and given you somewhere to stay? All I will say on this matter, is if you can't resist, is be as hygienic as possible in the environment. I am sure most promoters would not like people masturbating in there bathroom, or at least wouldn't want to know if they were. On the other end of the scale, on a recent visit to Revolvy towers in Leeds, we witnessed some very kind hospitality. A friend who was letting us stay there provided us with a fine selection of porn magazines, to which one of the band members kindly took to the toilet, apparently going for a number 2. Great hospitality!

Finally, one of the best places to relive yourself on tour or whilst travelling, is in a "video booth" in a porn shop. These are usually known as "wank booths". For those who don't know what they are, they are simply a booth one can sit inside and watch porno movies. Money is inserted and you get a private, locked booth, showing loads of porn movies for you to watch, leaving you free to wank away. Tissue is even provided! The money inserted usually goes quickly, but don't we all if it hasn't been a while? However if you aren't feeling that horny or you are a member of the female species, it is best to do some preparation before hand. You get me? On a side note, these booths are generally only available in London in the UK. They are more common throughout the European mainland. Besides actually getting some real sex, the 'wank booth' in my opinion is the best place to wank on tour.

In summing up, don't feel guilty for having a wank on tour, its only natural! And by doing so, will probably help you relax and cope

with the everyday stress if touring / travelling. Bring on the abuse / criticism!

And finally two shameless, but entitled plugs:

* HERO DISHONEST UK TOUR SEPTEMBER 2004

Hero Dishonest play fast, dirty and intelligent hardcore punk rock. Think What Happens Next, Minor Threat, Los Crudos, with a harsh Scandinavian edge of DS-13, Kaaos, Valse Triste. Go see 'em , before they tour America for 6 weeks.

Wed 8th: London or Nearby TBC
Thur 9th-Sun 12th: Ireland
Mon 13th: Manchester @ Star and Garter, with Extinction of Mankind, Narcosis, Burn All Flags
Tue 14th: Scarborough, with Belligerent Declaration
Wed 15th: Newcastle, with Fucked in the Face, Jinn
Thur 16th: Aberdeen @ Dr. Drakes, with See you in Hell, Homo Consumens
Fri 17th: Edinburgh @ Merkat, with See you in Hell, Homo Consumens
Sat 18th: Bradford @ 1 in 12 Club, with See you in Hell, Homo Consumens, Easpa Measa, Afterbirth, Broken Access, Motley Crudos, + more (all dayer)
Sun 19th: Boston @ The Indian Queen, with Easpa Measa
Mon 20th: Brighton @ Hobgoblin
Tue 21st: Bristol @ The Junction

<http://www.flatearth.free-online.co.uk/herodistour.htm> for up to date information

* waterintobeer #10 looks like it will not be out until the beginning of October. Apologies for the delay, but we have been busy having loads of fun this summer. <http://www.waterintobeer.tk> for up to date information.

Once again, it has been a pleasure. Feel free to email me on: skat1ska@yahoo.com to comment on my article, or ask me anything.



I don't drink milk. I like my coffee black, my tea green and to be brutally honest the idea of digesting a bowl of cardboard swimming in it every morning fills me with absolute fear, and that's before you even begin to consider the Kellogg-Conspiracy that three square breakfasts a day might just be the ultimate diet for you. The bible lied about the 'land of milk and honey' and guess what guys, so does the \$19 million dollar industry that is the Dairy Council, so hear me out before you ask for a trial by fingernails, and make up your own mind... I might not be as

self-righteous as you'd like to believe (N.B. Sorry for all the US statistics, but seeing as we'll all be speaking American pretty soon, I think you'll agree with me; our diets aren't too dissimilar to those of our brothers across the pond).

Contrary to popular opinion, Milk is quite possibly the least natural source of calcium known to man. Aside from the intrinsic fact that your average high-yield, dairy cow, kept hungry by the demands of its genetically uprooted metabolism (allowing it to eat around the clock and deliver no less than 100 pints a day) is only fit for culling at the age of three, the obsessive preoccupation with milk stems entirely from a Caucasian minority. 70%- of the world's population are in fact lactose intolerant, though to little avail Caucasian society remains adamant that an enforced intake of dairy products should in fact quash this bona fide allergy by the age of ten. Well here's the bad news...it doesn't...though very few people are going to point out that you might just be lactose intolerant next time you start complaining about gas, stress and diarrhoea, or that fact that our brothers and sisters with no dairy tradition (predominantly Asians, Africans, South-Europeans and Latin Americans) lose the metabolic ability to process lactose in any form by the age of four. Be it human, elephant or dog, milk is formulated to meet the specific birth requirements of its young and it's young only. Not only are we refusing to leave the tit, but we seem quite happy to exchange it for one exclusively intended for a four-stomached herbivore with a phenomenal bone mass and a hormone charged growth rate far greater than our own.

Whilst there's no doubt that calcium is crucial to good health (it's the most abundant mineral in our bodies, builds up to 1.5% of our weight, it makes our bones strong and rigid, is an essential player in the clotting of our blood, regulates muscle contractility, do I need to go on?) the dairy industry fell flat on their face in its insistence that milk and dairy are the best primary sources. Whilst milk, and dairy remain the most opulent of all calcium stores, the additional compositions of milk strive to further undo the best intentions of it's calcium abundance (the largest of these calcium thieves being a high amount of protein, which accounts for a loss of approximately two thirds of all the calcium you'll acquire through all milk consumption). The Vegetarian Nutrition Dietetic Practice Group, responsible for setting the annual RDA's for mineral intake have even gone as far as to suggest that "all the recommended dietary allowances - for protein, fats and nutrients, including calcium can easily be met within a plant based diet and, by extension, that nobody has need of milk or dairy." Looks like granny was right...a mere 100g of spring greens a day are unbeatable for calcium absorption, and are rich in Vitamin K, Calcium's little known sidekick in bone defence. Here's the bad news for all you chugging down the milk out there. Although a pint of milk may contain twice as much calcium as 200g of

greens, the greens still pack the same punch, as the higher protein and potassium levels of milk only serve to hinder the body's calcium absorption, as our bodies only effectively absorb a third of all milk's calcium content. All you have to do is study the extensive fossil evidence of pre-dairy, hunter-gatherer, fossils, which we probably would have never found if they weren't so well blessed in calcium, potassium and Vitamin K, from a predominantly plant based diet.

Osteoporosis? Worried, about it? Well increase your calcium intake by all means but leave the dairy produce in the fields where it belongs. The crux of the arguments against osteoporosis isn't down to the lack of calcium in our diets, but is single-handedly down to our western diet itself, being one that's heavy on acid inducing proteins and light on alkaline enhancing fruit and vegetables. European nations consume two to three times as much milk as their Asian counterparts, yet break two or three times as many bones, and whilst many Africans survive on less than half of the 1,300mg RDA of Calcium, their fracture rate is less than half that of the western world. The dairy industry's armour was badly pierced by a Harvard Nurses Health Study, published in the American Journal of Public Health, where out of the diets of 77,761 women, studied over a period of 12 years, it was revealed that not only did drinking milk bare no significant advantages to bone strength, but those who drank in excess of three glasses a day, suffered more fractures in the 12 year period than those who drank less than one glass a week. Further to this investigation, the Harvard nurses were confounded on yet another account when it was revealed that those drinking low-fat milk were especially at risk given the increased levels of Retinol (Vitamin A substitute added to low fat milk) it contains.

Another myth that needs shattering is the preconception that a high-milk diet is beneficial in the prevention of breast cancer. Any beneficial effect milk may have on combating cancer could be derived from its high calcium and vitamin D content, though the enemy in the midst comes from our adverse reaction to the IGF-1 Insulin Growth Factor. IGF-1, naturally contained within both human and cows milk accelerates malignant cell growth, increasing the spread of any cancerous tumours we may be harbouring, with IGF-1 being the main target of the anti-cancer drug tamoxifen. Breast cancer aside my advice to any blokes out there would be to ditch the milk and eat more fruit and veg. if it's calcium you're looking for! Trust me, not only would it make your girlfriend more likely to 'swallow' in the future, but you'll be cutting the chances of contracting prostate cancer in half! High calcium intake lowers your body's concentration of 1,25-dihydroxyvitamin D3, a prostate cancer-protection hormone, as each additional 500mg of calcium you ingest a day will put you 16% more at risk. Given that an average glass of milk contains about 300mg

of calcium (and yes, that's the 2/3rds you're body actually absorbs!) those of you who regularly eat cereal for breakfast, and drink two to three small glasses of milk a day could be increasing your chances of getting prostate cancer by 48%.

Lecture over, take my advice as you will, but please do your own research if you don't like being preached to. Don't forget guys, you can't trust the Dairy Council, and whilst a lot of openly vegan websites like milksucks.com have their heads in the right place their arguments naturally a little one sided and far less reassuring so stay objective, look for the facts and stick to the broadsheets! (There have been a couple of excellent, and very lengthy articles on the detrimental effects of milk in both the Guardian and the Times; I'm sure they'll have them archived on their website, and I know they're on the net somewhere because that's where I read them).

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Chris Lever



So, another summer is drawing to a close... After months of anticipation it flashes past us in the blink of an eye, leaving us to wonder what happened to all our grand plans, dreams and endless sunny days (well, perhaps not consistently sunny if you look at the sky and see the disturbingly obvious effects of Global Warming... Flash floods?! In August?!). Usually I'm left with a hollow feeling, realising in retrospect that I achieved little of what I wanted from those days...but this year is different...I'm sitting back in my chair with Death By Stereo blasting out of the speakers, a comforting view of rolling hills outside the window of my new house and, best of all, a feeling of satisfaction coaxing a smile onto my face. A million little things have made this summer one of the best of my life, experiences ranging from my first ever stencil-spraying outing in Central London to being taught how to make a bong from a potato and a piece of plastic by amazingly hospitable Lithuanian punks. Of course, I don't believe any period in your life can be complete 'perfection' (particularly when waking up to a broken window and a carpet permeated with disintegrating wedding cake after our ill-fated decision to throw a party very nearly pushed me over the edge) It can definitely come close. All this doey-eyed positivity gave me the most unoriginal column idea I've ever had: The Three Things That Rocked About This Summer...So, here we go!

1) The Tabuns Festival in Kuldiga, Latvia. I'd only heard about this festival through reading Antimani's tour diary

from the previous year and I don't think anything could have prepared me for the real thing. Picture this: A festival in the woods in one of the most remote parts of Latvia, completely inaccessible by public transport, with no corporate sponsorship and seemingly no safety regulations whatsoever. I heard that the festival accommodates about 1000 people and costs something like £5 for 3 days, with bands coming from all over Europe (but mainly Lithuania and Latvia). We left Riga in the van sometime in the afternoon, listening to Children of Bodom (although to this day I'm not sure why) and watched the flat green countryside fly past in a blur, broken only by the frequent festival-bound hitchhikers with tattered cardboard signs. By the time we arrived there was no more room to pitch a tent by the side of the stage (!) so we were encouraged by an organiser to climb down a precarious rope-passage towards the river and set up camp in the weeds. Navigating near-death and drunken hippy/punk hybrids we finally found a place to camp, only to find my friend Gerfried sheepishly realise his large tent was "Missing some essential parts", i.e. - he had left the poles in Austria. Our home for the next few days was situated between riverside wilderness, a techno dance stage and a beer hut with dangerously cheap local beers on offer...all day and all night. The other festival-goers were some of the most interesting people I have ever met, helping to cook our soya steaks on the campfire, showing us the safest places to swim in the river (although that didn't stop lethal currents dragging us speedily towards Kuldiga's famous waterfall) and introducing us to local cuisine (The famous 'Apfelpie'-half vodka, half apple juice and sprinkles of cinnamon). However, a little too much apfelpie with our new Latvian friends had us all crammed in a 2-person tent, snoring contentedly whilst the rain soaked our shoes outside and the bands continued to play until the early hours. Waking up in the wilderness with a Lithuanian guy jumping into my tent; grabbing my ankle and screaming, 'Chris! Have some milk!' really made me realise how bizarre this place was and how much fun it is to be simultaneously completely confused and completely overwhelmed. The festival rocked because it was 100% DIY- all the food was vegan/vegetarian, all the drinks were locally produced and the people 'in charge' were generally pissed up Latvians, happy in the knowledge that no one would abuse their generosity and effort.

2) Meeting Matilda. Now, I'm pretty sure that this person would be slightly freaked out to know she popped onto this list, but my point in selecting this is slightly more abstract than simply meeting someone I thought was cool. I don't have as many girlfriends as I'd like to have, mostly cause I'm not into the plethora of clichéd 'girly' activities- shopping, talking about makeup, Take That (or whatever)...you get my drift. Meeting Matilda woke me up (however belatedly) to the fact that there are other girls who enjoy the same things as me- being dirty/makeup-less, getting drunk,

actually dancing to bands as oppose to standing around looking pretty. She was smart, streetwise (I realise that that phrase is disturbingly middle-aged, I meant that she gave us the best tips for shoplifting [granny trolleys!], didn't take any shit from anyone and basically flew in the face of any gender stereotypes you can think up. I realise I just used a gender stereotype, but I guess that's the whole point- no matter how much I criticize people's prejudices, I most definitely had my own) and simply fun to be around. The morning I first spoke to her I was feeling a little melancholy, sitting in the garden of this Lithuanian farm being harassed by a rabid dog and reading Catch 22. She made me a cup of coffee and just sat next to me smoking a cigarette in that intrinsically Parisian way she had, waiting for me to talk if I wanted to, but happy to just sit in silence and listen to the distant ringing of church bells all the same. For me she typified female independence and had the spark of a militant activist that had us crowding around her, enthralled by the stories of tear gas and criminal damage told in her lilting French accent. Sitting with her eating vegan creations and drinking beer whilst discussing everything from global politics to the macho French hardcore scene rates very high up on my 'Top Summer Moments'. Matilda definitely rocked, but this is more about what she represented than the actual person herself. I guess I never noticed my prejudice against other girls...Brushes with girls within 'the scene' who give girls a bad reputation, or simply females whose company I found severely boring...Meeting her made me evaluate my female friendships, some of which I value sincerely despite the rarity with which we see each other, but some which never really clicked and were more out of a desire to be accepted by my gender. She represented the fusion of male and female within a person at a balance, something I like to imagine I have myself, but have longed to notice and admire in someone else. Score one for the 'tomboys'...If that's even the write word!

3) **The In Arms Reach squat.** I won't go into too many details about this one mainly because (fingers crossed) we're going to be putting together a IAR fanzine and no doubt it'll be mentioned elsewhere in here...However, I will say that some of my favourite times occurred whilst staying at Portman Street. The whole concept of running a DIY festival from a building we hadn't even found a week before the events started seemed horrifyingly ambitious and doomed to failure, but due to skill or sheer luck everything came together in time, providing us and anyone who came down with something fun to occupy ourselves with. The feeling on the first day of the festival with people struggling against the oppressive heat in the sauna we had created in the gig-room thanks to DIY soundproofing tips, but smiling and laughing all the time whilst rocking out to good bands who were genuinely supportive of what we were trying to achieve, was somewhere close to indescribable...Although I'll have to say

there was a large amount of relief that the floor didn't fall in! Aside from the activities, I just loved waking up and falling asleep surrounded by other people, counting on the fact that whatever time you were up and about there would be someone to share a joke with, or go out skipping with (don't even get my started on the amazing Marks'n'Spencers skips. Perfection in a box)...people to learn from or even just trade useless information about freemasonry and ringworm with... You get the point... I loved being part of a community. I suppose before I went in there I was unaware of how naive I was to things like shoplifting and scavenging for appliances. I had no idea how easy it is! Learning from the people I came into contact with has stirred something deep inside of me, woken up ideas I didn't know I had, inspired me to change things- personally and beyond- and, in some ways, given me a purpose. Battling the A-level system, being forced to make decisions about 'what I want to do with my life' and trying to scrape together some money to get to Eastern Europe this summer really strained my outlook on life. It feels good to finally have a more positive perspective and the opportunity to sit back in my chair and smile as the sun sets over Farnham.

I guess that's all for now, folks...

Chris twelve-oh-five:
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Endnotes:

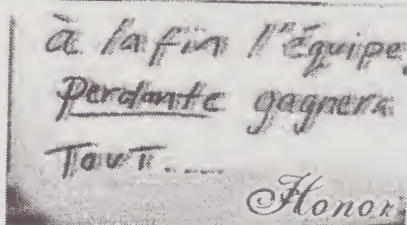
- In case there is any confusion, 'Chris' is in fact short for 'Christina'. I figured it was about time to clarify that, although I still love getting e-mails that start with 'Hey Man'.

- Go see The Mercury League. They are amazing and even forgave us for nearly killing their drummer.

- I managed to severely fuck up my university plans for this year...However, it looks like I might be going to Leeds. I won't have anywhere to live though so get in touch if I can crash with you whilst I get myself sorted/you're looking for a roommate. Alternatively, if you can think of something better for me to do with my year than study, please suggest because it's not too late to defer!

- I intend to write a new issue of Twelve-oh-Five in the next couple of weeks. It's probably going to be made up solely of personal stories- traveling, delinquency, etc- so if you'd like to contribute or get your hands on a copy, drop me a line.

- I was going to make some moronically love struck comment here, but then decided I'm too embarrassed. But, I will say that 'I forgot how much fun kissing is'. Until next time.



I work at the Worcester Royal Hospital, this is an irrelevant fact, but I'm going

somewhere, let me assure you. Basically there's this guy there from the mental health ward who spends all day everyday wandering round the grounds of the hospital smoking Golden Virginia with no shoes on and muttering to himself. So he's pretty crazy by normal standards, but I've started thinking that this guy - he's got it cracked. I mean fair enough, his feet are pretty dirty, but he's not half as crazy as all the women in the personnel dept working from 8 in the morning till seven at night in jobs they hate, while they get older and older and more and more downtrodden. I've noticed they even have this certain walk...it looks like they've fallen in battle and are walking towards POW camps one dogged step at a time, and I'm not even exaggerating. And they're not stupid, most of them have degrees and HAD, at one point a future in front of them, but they ended up just comfortable enough, just salaried enough to go out and get drunk one night and spend the rest of the week watching television and eating ready meals. And fair enough everyone's gotta make a living, everyone's got rent to pay, and unless you go squat a building and live off the fat of Tesco's skips you gotta get a job. And in a nihilistic way yeah, we could all just count peas for all eternity since there's no real higher purpose, so we might as well do anything. But I reckon the guy who wrote that never worked 7am-5pm in a factory with no windows inspecting defective phone covers, cos if he had, he'd say, 'fair, spend all eternity counting peas, but make sure you've got some tapes to listen to whilst you're doing it'.

I reckon all this is because English people are creatures of comfort, I mean as soon as you've got your hire purchase on a Vauxhall Vectra and a Barratt home, everything's A-OK...we've got no drive anymore, it's all just about sitting around getting fat. I wish I could go round every office in the Worcester area with a cattle prod, trying to make people make something of their lives rather than just rotting away in a living death. All that I know is that I don't mind being a 'productive member of society' and paying all my taxes and all that bollocks, but if I find myself aged 23 photocopying and mail-merging to pay my way I think I might just give it up there and then and check into the mental health unit myself.

End notes

1. Worcester got its first local zine, called 'Random Magazine' (£1 from blinkingprophet@hotmail.com)... It was sorta cool in a w-mids kind of way, good luck to em I say... (although the Crown was always way better than the void, lol)

2. I'm going to Leeds in a couple of months to study English, if anyone knows anything about Leeds, like what local bands are good, any decent record stores, what the people at the uni are like or any of that crap please, please email me...I'm shiteing my pants at the thought of it.

3. George wanted me to write something un-politically correct about altering clothes here...but I'm way to pussy, if you'd like to know my opinions on hacking up movie life



t-shirts please email me at the above address...

Shopping addicts and retail therapy?

Living in London means that I am surrounded by shops. Everywhere I go I see shops. Journeys are just a nightmarish mass of signs and front windows that blend into one. All over there seems to be one long high street, with not much in-between. For example, I have over 10 branches of H&M at my disposal, most within a 30 minutes bus ride away. Granted we all tend to wear clothes but isn't this just a little excessive. And if its yet more clothes I want, well, I have an almost infinite array at hand. I know that clothes aren't like a washing machine where we just tend to have one but surely the amount of clothes offered for sale in the shops is enough to kit everyone out in a perpetuate state of new outfits each week. I thought the whole point of having the washing machine was so that we could wear our clothes again once they got dirty.

When I first moved to London friends and relatives all cooed and commented on how lucky I was to have so many shops and so much 'choice'. To be honest though I find shopping horrible and the concept even more abhorrent. I simply can't stand Oxford Street. Besides the shops just repeat themselves every quarter mile anyway. It's like an endless loop on the background reel of a cartoon. Even the thought of having to walk down Oxford Street to get from A - B sends me into a shudder. Walking amongst shopping zombie addicts in search of their next hit just isn't my thing.

Glimpses into the shop windows is enough to confirm my theories of irrelevance and excess. I wonder how much of this stuff people need or actually want. I was thinking about this the other day as I traversed the land of woe that is Oxford Street and I looked in dismay at windows lined with objects upon objects, overflowing with shoes, coats, t-shirts, bags, scarves, mobile phones, jewellery, etc, etc, etc. It's especially clothes and other forms of conspicuous consumption that I detest most because these are the objects that are so superficial and shallow that I am constantly bombarded with, being told I must buy if I want to be considered attractive. If I can get through life without buying new clothes for winter because the ones I've got are already sufficient surely everyone else can.

The shops are abundant with stock but in terms of what myself and I suspect many others can get out of them they are positively empty. Within this bubble wonderland of 'choice' I couldn't find anything I wanted even if I tried. When out of desperation I'm

forced to trundle down to the high street they won't even have what I want because the focus will be on the seasons must have colours or details that I don't even like and will be out of fashion within a few days anyway. I guess if I really wanted to I could spend £14.99 on a t-shirt with a funky logo but really its just lame. About 500 other people will have the same top anyway so there's always the danger of meeting a person wearing the same outfit as you which is for some reason considered the most mortifying experience you could think of. I think its something to do with the myth we have been fed about individuality and being able to develop our own personal styles even when this can't be feasible with the logic of global capitalism and homogenisation.

With little else to do at the weekend people flock to the shopping centres as if the new pilgrimage. The pay homage to the credit card god sacrificing their money and time to the new cathedrals and masters. They return home after worship with more trinkets and paraphernalia to add to their home shrines.

I don't really get the out of town discount shopping centres either. Far too many times have I been dragged around them to visit lifeless generic carbon copies in supposedly bargainous outlets. They tend to consist of a Pilot (cheap and nasty Lolita-esque apparel), a 'bookshop' (said in the loosed possibly context because the books will generally be Mills & Boon, Justin Timberlake's Autobiography, and WW2 popular 'history' books), a Claire's Accessories complete with moronic adult staff wearing glitter and tiaras aimed at 5 years olds, a sportswear shop and a household goods shop which no one has ever heard off anyway so can't tell if its cheap. Even the people I've gone with normally concede to just purchasing a tea towel therefore proving the pointlessness of the excursion and the complete waste of petrol, time and energy.

It's the way that it's marketed as a complete day out for all the family that is even more sickening. Oh look we have a food hall so we can bleed even more money out of you in return for cardboard flavoured chips and a fizzy drink. Has it really got that desperate that people have nothing else to do other than shop. Are we really that incapable of thinking of alternative outings. How about a nice countryside walk for example? Oh no wait we're destroying that for our out of towns, our ever encroaching suburbia and our roads between them.

Then there are the cheery signs, warm welcomes, false smiles and fake goodbyes. Do I know you? Do I care? Do you care? Having worked in retail I know I don't. When serving people on tills I tend to have a continuous script playing in my head. It goes hello, smile, please, thank you, goodbye, smile, hello, smile, please, thank you, goodbye, smile and so on and so on. It's hardly taxing stuff or the most sincere of say the least.

I find it incredibly offensive the way in which women and young girls are targeted and offered shopping as an acceptable form of recreation. The department store was invented as a place where unchaperoned women could respectfully be seen in public. For women to fulfil the role as vacuous consumer she is doing a good job, non threatening, de-intellectualised, aiding the market and businessmen's profits. I hate the belittling t-shirts that decry 'shopping, chocolate, boys, shopping,' ad infinitum. as if we were just mindless machines programmed to shop til we drop.

Kitsch postcards and 50s iconography of the happy American all consuming housewife have sprung up everywhere. Brightly smiling, happy, subdued and on anti depressants more like, but the myth carries on. Shopping is now dished out like a pill. Witty catchphrases and women on handbags stating that 'those who say money can't buy you happiness have obviously been looking in the wrong shop' - yeah, obviously!. After an era of war and hardship a new fantasy land was created in the form of the shopping mall. Bland, inoffensive, sterile, conforming and uniform. Some traits I think quite few men would like women to have if only we would shut up and stop being so independent.

I've watched otherwise intelligent women reduce themselves to idiocy by having inane conversations over pointless fluffy stationary, talking about it as if it's the most important thing in their lives. I've overheard banal chatter about how they just adore the new high street collections and are able to draw this conversation out for hours. Its all trivial and no wonder men and advertisers are taking the piss out of us.

Why am I only focusing on the women though. Probably because it bothers me most that this is the prevailing cultural view of women as consumer but men shop and do consumerism just as much. Gross over generalisation but men love their gadgets and clothes. My brother spends a fortune on clothes all the time and he regularly visits the large 25 minute drive away out of town purpose built heterogeneous shopping complex.

Of course I used to salivate with desire at the thought of shopping. I wanted to be like one of the girls out of 'Clueless' and I'd copy the phrases and American accents, like whatever, it was all so much fun. I'd yearn after being seen looking popular in like, the Mall surrounded with friends, arms laden with beautiful cardboard bags with string handles overflowing with boutiquey tissue paper.

Of course that never happened but I remember saving the nicer bags that sometimes if you were lucky were made out of strong paper and looked a bit posh. Some of the girls at school made a point out of always carrying one of these sorts of bags, slung over their shoulder as a weird status symbol.

I can also remember just how much I had wanted a pair of Kickers at school, or the pester power that went into me receiving my first and only Addidas tracksuit (navy blue with yellow stripe) Its so easy to criticise people for wanting brands but when you're young and self conscious, wanting to fit in its pretty hard to zone out. Eventually I did get a pair of Kickers (they were in the sale) and they probably got a couple of months wear out of them until I decided I didn't like them anymore. I must have drove my mum crazy. The marketers are certainly doing a good job though by industry standards.

More troubling though is why then do so many of the hardcore kids I see around feel so compelled to adopt this new brand of regimented uniform. It's got the stage now where everyone looks the same. I couldn't believe it when I discovered just how much effort 'alternative' kids put into their look and how the same issues of brands and names crop up. I though the whole point of punk was that it was different from mainstream mentality. Are we really that fickle?

Somewhere underneath this flimsy mountain of cloth lies the epitome of what I despise most about our consumer driven culture. Somehow the belief that buying into cheap tat will improve our otherwise lifeless lives has slithered into our minds.

Shopping is a dirty chore. Whilst the prices shops charge are ridiculously high for the quality of what they sell its not the factory workers who will be seeing much of it. Cheap fashion shops can sell t-shirts for 3 quid, little handbags for 1.50 and shoes for 5 or 7 quid. Topshop et al are able to sell a similar quality good but more for it based on the brand that they have. Many clothes retailers will use some form of sweated foreign labour which usually translates as women in Asia, Indonesia and South America making your new attire for you. My mum once suggested that surely this was a good thing as it meant people had work. I gently suggested that maybe it wasn't as amazing as it looked. As the world rolls over to the capitalist way we all must sell our labour in order to survive. Whatever you think about this wages are only at a subsistence level and health and safety isn't given much attention to. Most of the money fuelling 'development' will never be seen by the country let alone ordinary people as profits go back to the foreign investors and management boards. She has started to make noises about having pangs of guilt whenever she buys cheap commodities made abroad as she starts to wonder what the true social price is.

We live in a world of waste and want. Aisles of goods from which a significant percentage will go unused are commonplace. How can this be justifiable when we also live in a world of such scarce resources that it often all too unbearably apparent to so many individuals.

People talk about being addicted to shopping, to excess, to Epicureanism, to extravagance, to vulgarity, to debt, to misery, to eventual decline and fall... Honestly, does shopping really give that much pleasure. People have become accustomed to constant, instant gratification. With mounting debt people still pile it all on the plastic and bury their heads in their bags. When our clothes and shoe mountains do eventually fall down on us the reality check will be all to stark to see.

Students say that they have it hard. Every year the NUS and the opposition governments will come out insisting how shocking the amount of debt today's youngsters are in is. The Daily Mail (typical readership of middle aged middle class home countyists with one of their offspring named either Charlotta or Ollie leaving the nest and attending university leaving said parents to pick up the bill, whilst they live up new found freedom drinking their own weight in beer in the student union or smoking weed for the first time pretending they really have been a rebellious hippy all the time) will offer support and talk of the 'war on the middle classes. They will tout numbers of 5 figure sums students are finding themselves in debt too and overdrafts to the tune of.

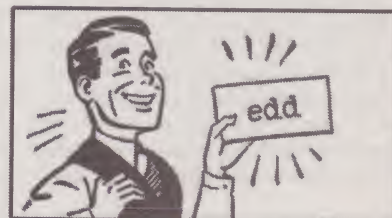
Well fuck off. Of course I support free education but by having part time jobs, working a bit over the summer and not being excessively frivolous I've actually got a plus sum in my bank account and whilst being a student I didn't consider myself that poor. Granted the money represents surplus money from my student loan but I don't need to pay that back until I earn over a certain amount and I never went remotely close to having an overdraft unlike most.

It's a bloody good job I've got that money there though because being a graduate with no proper job yet and limited prospects of finding one is where the real poverty sets in. At the moment I don't even make enough money to cover rent so I am eating into my savings. Bite by bite my depression grows at having a decent degree from one of the top universities in Britain. I wouldn't wish the frustration and worry I've felt on anyone.

I now know what it feels like to be unemployed. All the stuff you've been dying to do but never had time still doesn't get done because you have hours on end to look forward to of trawling through papers and the internet for jobs, writing application forms, cover letters and sending of CVs. Application forms I might add exist only to piss people off. They work for the benefit of the employers who want information all laid out in a uniform manner that they can compare side by side that answer specific questions but when it comes round to writing out a list of previous employers, exam results and references for the umpteenth time in spaces that are far too small let alone writing the best bit - personal statements of over 100 words - it can get

pretty annoying. I've actually taken to just printing the same version, if slightly altered text on my computer because it's quicker. Then there is the moping and general lethargy to go alongside with it.

Part of my problem stems from the fact that I trying desperately not to have to resort to do temp work for a soul destroying corporate environment that exists solely to destroy brain cells with mindless protocol and procedure. I want a job in the arts, cultural, education or charity sector. I also want a job that allows me to use my brain and own initiative and to do something worthwhile with my time. The annoying thing is though for something that isn't very well paid it seems you need a masters in museum studies to ever get through the door and sweep floors at the V&A. To add further to my annoyance for the fuckers out there who just want jobs for money it seems people can glide effortlessly onto graduate recruitment programmes. Where's the justice in that I ask?



I spent the summer feeling ever so slightly lost. Spread too thinly, having taken on far too many commitments, and not wanting to burden (or trusting) anyone with my problems. All the same I felt more content than I ever have done before. I'm gradually feeling like I'm "calming" down. I don't find myself seething at everything everyday. Not to say that I'm not angry. Anger is something that's bought to me everyday. Be it reading about eight year old children being shot in their schools to protect "Israel" through to the fact that around six million animals are killed everyday in Europe just because people have deemed that this is acceptable. I don't feel as overwhelmed by this anger as I was a few months, or a year ago. One reason is because I don't feel as isolated as I did a little while ago. In the past year I've made some amazing friends, all of whom seem to share a deep-seated discontent. Likewise I feel more stable in my involvement in the punk scene, and feel as though I'm gradually getting more involved in something that I care most about. The problem with being content though is that it doesn't produce terribly interesting reading material.

It all started with Natalie talking to a stranger so I blame her. Getting on the 73 a woman told her she was pretty, gave her a card, and told her to come to the casting for extras that her company was doing the next day. Natalie was flattered, but not flattered enough to go on her own, so I got dragged along. All the card had said was that it was a new comedy set in London that Chris Morris (the guy who did 'Brasseys') was putting together. "It's gonna be about Shoreditch" I warned. Natalie denied it,

largely I expect because she didn't want to feel like her recently cut fringe made her look like someone who visits Hoxton regularly. Needless to say I was right.

Arriving at 'TalkBack' at the ungodly hour of 10am (which means you gotta be up at 8.30 if you live where Natalie lives) we were met by other hopefuls. I tried to avoid eye contact praying that when I walked down the street people didn't associate me with the indie kids sitting opposite me. It's times like those when I wish that I had a mohawk, or at least crusty dreadlocks. After five odd minutes we were called upstairs to be 'cast'. Both of us were put against the wall and photographed, and then handed a list of lines that we could read to a camera if we wanted a speaking part. Speaking parts pay more. We spoke to the camera. The calibre of the comedy was laid bare by such insightful lines as 'Yeah fuck George Bush, I'd vote for Michael Moore', almost as good as the 'I like the word cunt. CUNT.' that Natalie - for some reason - decided to say to camera. The ordeal - thankfully was over after ten minutes. In hindsight I should have given the wrong phone number and then it would all have been over.

A few days later Natalie got rung up and asked if she wanted to go work as an extra. Strangely rather than be glad I hadn't been asked I felt slight pangs of jealousy that they thought she was better than me. Those feelings were to be crushed three days later when I got rung up myself. 'So you're going to be cast as a character called the bee-keeper' someone told me whilst I was trying to find a medium sized hoodie when there only appeared to be XLs left (This happens a lot at Household Name). 'Uh hum' I kind of muttered back not really having paid much attention to him. 'It shouldn't take much of the day. The England match is in the evening so we're gonna hopefully gonna be wrapping everything up early.' He lied. 'OK' I said. 'Plus you get £100 - So just make sure you're with us for 9 tomorrow'.

Hackney Road is not somewhere you want to find yourself on at 9 in the morning. You have to contend with the 'professionals', all bright eyed and bushy tailed heading to their shit jobs somewhere in the Corporation of London. Equally don't expect anyone to help you out with directions unless you give them some money. So there's me wandering aimlessly up Hackney Road deciding that if I hadn't come across it in the next couple hundred metres I'd quit and just go home. It's not like I would have lost out on much.

I finally found the parking lot at ten past nine. I should have known scary stuff was happening when the first person that I met knew who I was. 'Oh wow, you're the bee-keeper aren't you?' Not realising my doom I just nodded my head, this was clearly deemed to be consent to be dragged by my wrist across the parking lot with this crazy woman telling everyone, 'The bee-keeper's here'. Surreal.

Ten minutes later I'm wearing a bee-keepers outfit, hood and all. It doesn't unzip. Or at

least it does, I just haven't worked out it does. I'm not enjoying the prospect of walking through the day having a grey film in front of my vision. I take out MRR, when some scary girl in too much make-up starts talking to me. I try to ignore her and continue to read about Mykel Board. It's only when she says my name that I realise that it's Natalie. I'm of course tactful and erudite asking her why she let a clown draw on her face. Amazingly she giggles rather than slaps me.

The mad woman who dragged me across the parking lot comes rushing up to us babbling. After a couple of seconds I make out that she's saying we need to get on the bus to go to the filming. It's only then that I realise we're going to Club 333, where two of my friends work. Club 333, for those not familiar with Hoxton/ Shoreditch, is something akin to hell, and may have been invented simply to taunt those who have some kind of musical taste, and vague atheistic value. 'Oh well at least the normal clientele won't be there today' I thought slightly too optimistically to myself.

I spot a kid in a Trencher shirt on the bus and mentally wonder whether his girlfriend dragged him in to this quagmire. I don't get to ask him this, since he wants to tell me about the script he's just read. My role's written as 'Bee-Keeper dancing manically as though on every pill available'. I mentally question whether I should x-up and then decide that'd be even more lame. It's the rest of the script that makes me wonder what the fuck I've got myself into.

An hour later I'm down in Club 333's basement on one of their sofa's having to endure an 'edgy' short film, which basically seems to be made up of dodgy porn, art ripping off Blinky and digs at queers. Definitely not cool. Equally uncool is the woman opposite me who's being made to dance in her bikini. It's never really explained why a woman would come to a club in just her bikini, but maybe that's what forty year old male producers want to believe happens in Hoxton.

'And action'. Dance. Dance. Dance. Forget about the 500w floodlight that's right next to your head. Dance. Dance. Sweat. Sweat. Feel faint. Dance. Dance. Groan as you realise the first extra has fucked up his lines. Repeat *ad nauseum* for pretty much the rest of the day. Extras suck. Or at least the extras with lines sucked. I'm sorry but it is not difficult to remember the line, 'This is me, yeah, this is me. You're you. Yeah, are you, you? Yeah, well this is me!' whilst simultaneously holding up a flier showing your face. Really it's not hard. Apparently though this is beyond shoreditch-twats cerebral cortex's to manage, and so they have to fuck it up again and again and again until it reaches the point where the director comes close to tears, and Chris Morris looks like he's going to punch him. I wish he had - at least that would have been funny. Incidentally the next two talking extras also keep fucking it up, but we'll ignore that, they

didn't annoy me quite as much as the first dude.

And then it came time for my head shot. 'Dance manically like you're on every pill available'. Yup I can manage that. I'll try and avoid eye contact with the camera too, hopefully that way no one will recognise me if they watch this fucking thing. One take. Nailed. Chris Morris comes up and shakes me by the hand and says 'Thank you'. He hasn't done that to anyone else. Somehow this doesn't give me any satisfaction though. 'So can I go now then?' I mean it is six o'clock by this point, and I really don't wanna miss Shai Hulud's last show. 'Sorry mate we've got to do another angle now'. Mental groan.

The 'other angel' involved us being filmed whilst some stupid twat sung an incredibly offensive song about what 'Trash bat is...' which was apparently the club we were in. I can't remember what he specifically said but I can remember deciding 'fuck this' and stopping to dance. Despite being on a podium no one seemed to notice. I think the light was obscuring their vision. It was certainly making me sweat like a mongrel, and was giving me a splitting headache. Thankfully half an hour later, at six thirty they finally tell us we can go get oh money.

I'm still in a bad mood after getting the £100. It hasn't made the headache go away.

End notes:

1. Back in January I moved in with a friend of a friend called Sam, who turned out to be one of the coolest people I've ever met. We moved out of the flat in July but I'm really gonna miss living with him, and with his utterly insane sleeping and eating habits. I'm not sure he even reads this stuff, though he did regularly use it as toilet paper when we'd run out of it. What I won't miss is living in the hovel that we were stuck in on top of a shop which played the same song about how wonderful Allah was for the six months that we were living there.
2. I'm becoming depressed by the fact that no band seems to be anywhere near as good as Propagandhi.
3. I'm equally depressed by the Daily Mail promising that the Weather Underground (a group who bombed the crap out of the FBI, and various other American institutions - such as the LAPD - from late 60s to late 70s) were gonna reform specially for the Republican National Convention in New York. Other great ideas that the Daily Mail came up with was putting mice into the ventilation shafts of the hotel that all the Republicans were staying at, and destroying the electricity supply for Manhattan so that the convention couldn't happen. Unfortunately none of this happened!
4. This column was originally supposed to be for my friend Chris and his zine 'Ippgloss'. My computer wouldn't let me get the column off my computer though so I had to put it in here instead, and leaves Chris with the really crap column that I wrote this time last year. Sorry Chris. I'll try harder next time!

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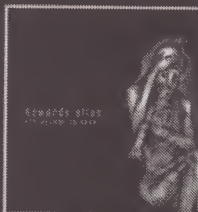


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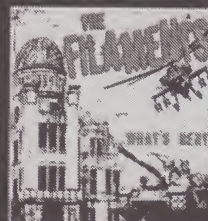


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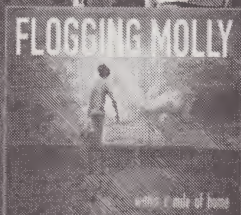
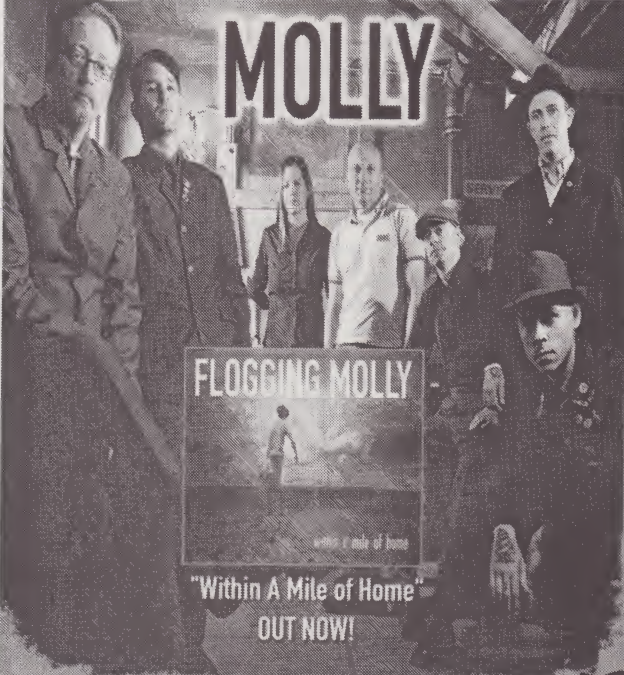
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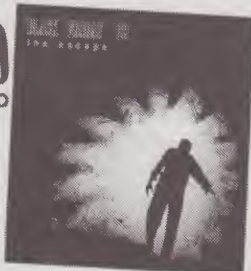
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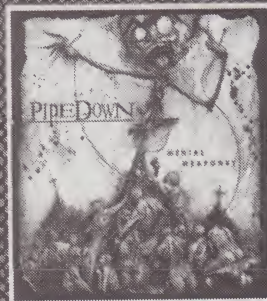
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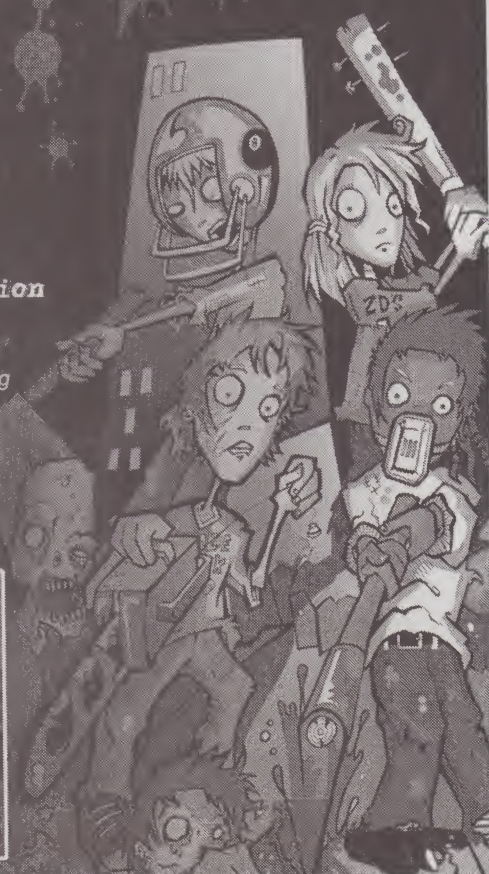
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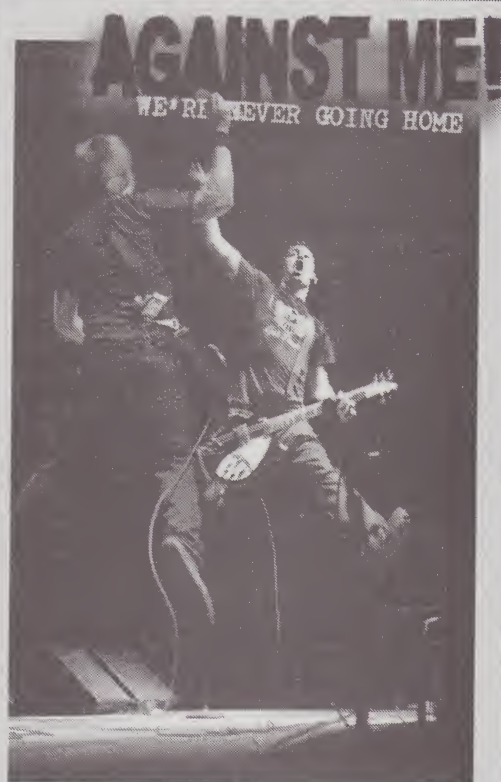
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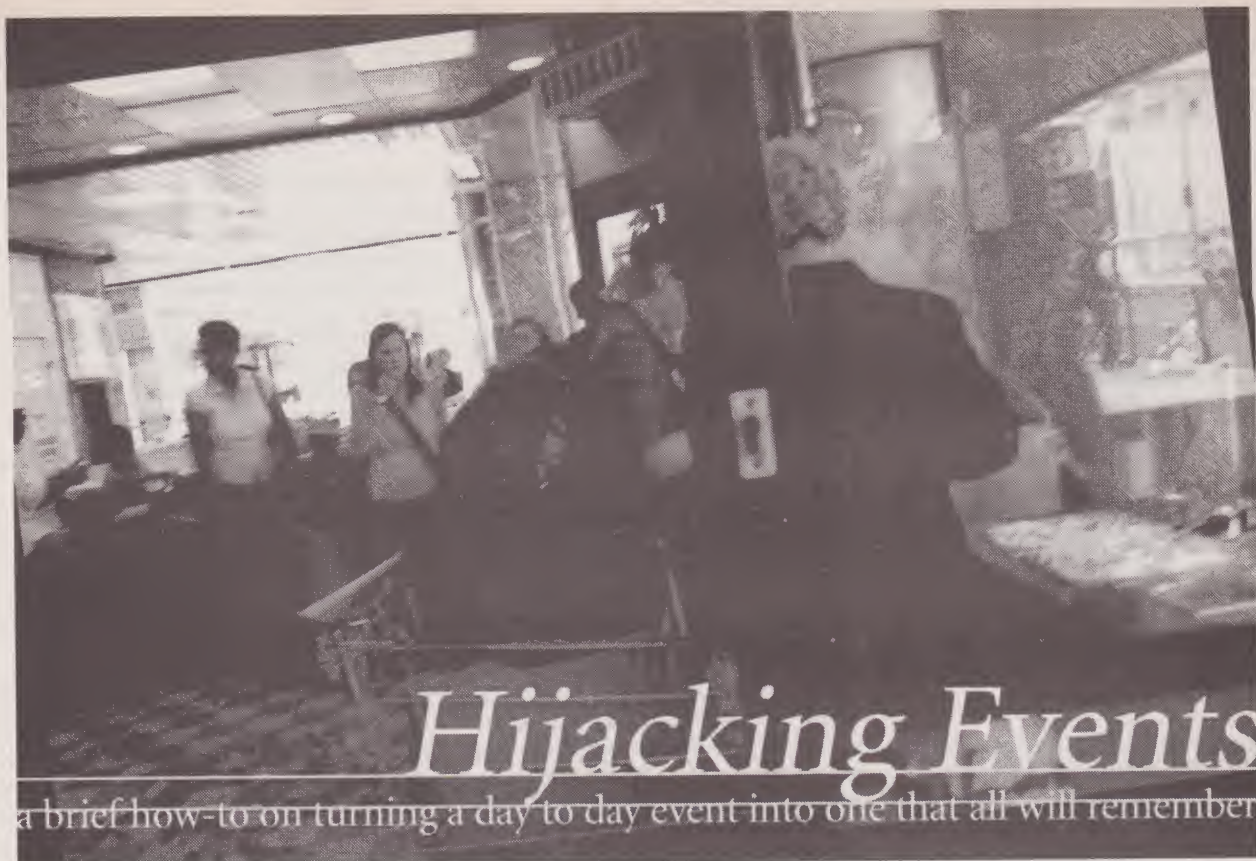
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Hijacking Events

a brief how-to on turning a day to day event into one that all will remember

Materials

A public event
A secret plan

The whole entertainment industry, including the underground punk and hip hop scenes, is basically a distraction, or at best a pressure valve: whether we're staving off cravings for pleasure and togetherness until Thursday night at the bar, or channeling rage and ingenuity into folk songs instead of frontal attacks on the police state, these little opportunities for amusement and outlets for creativity keep us satisfied enough that we don't do anything crazy—like demand such excitement and self-determination in every moment of our lives.

At least that's one version of the story. The other runs like this: coming together to create and celebrate, we develop a sense of what we're capable of, which we can draw upon in broader struggles to take back more of our lives. Either way, it's clearly not enough for subversive ideas and dance moves to remain in the clubs and basements forever. Could there be a way to liberate them from those confines, to hijack the brief moments of authentic living we're permitted and turn them upon the status quo that circumscribes them?

Quite a lot of energy and expectation is invested in these moments; people who find their daily lives boring and meaningless look forward to concerts and parties for weeks in advance, approaching them with all the reverence and sense of limitless possibility that pagan religious festivals once occasioned. To the hardened revolutionary, this can seem pathetic; but the excitement

itself is authentic enough, and all that remains is for it to be re-directed back to a subversive, liberating engagement with the total social environment.

This could mean inciting a crowd exiting a concert to a Reclaim the Streets action, setting up an open mic circle around a campfire outside a predictably alienating music festival, even turning a post-playoff victory celebration into a street riot in which rival sports fans unite to fight the police. Rather than struggle to create a radical situation from scratch, one can take advantage of existing opportunities, adding whatever elements are missing to set off the bombs everyday events conceal. Rebellious tendencies diverted from revolutionary possibilities into institutionalized rituals can be redirected back to them; the "real meaning" that punk rock, dance parties, picket lines, and action movies have had all along suddenly becomes clear to those who have enjoyed them, and the desires they inhibited through programs of carefully controlled indulgence are realized as these forms are superseded.

Let's talk specifically about one of the more challenging examples of this, turning the end of a show into an unpermitted march. It's not easy to organize unpermitted marches—if you announce them publicly, the police will be there from the beginning, making everything difficult, and only those who think of themselves as proponents of direct action are likely to show up. Taking advantage of an existing crowd to offer the opportunity for an unpermitted march, on the other hand, offers not only the benefit of surprise, but also can mean that many who would not otherwise have joined in get the opportunity

to have an empowering, exciting experience. The police can't watch every single show and public event for signs of "spontaneous" crowd activity; even if they could, it would only provoke more resistance.

Rumors can be spread before the event that "something" will happen afterwards, to pique interest; make sure that no one cites specific individuals as the origins of the rumors. It helps a lot to have the band (or performers, speakers, etc.) in on it; they can announce that something will happen, or let others do so, or, best-case scenario, at the end of their performance, when they have everyone's attention and an atmosphere has been created, lead everyone out into the street.

The moment when people leave the sanctioned performance area is the critical juncture: the group must develop momentum, morale, and cohesion before malaise or law enforcement can intervene. If a core group can be playing and distributing drums and other musical instruments, as well as masks and banners and so on, as people come out into the street, this will help get things going; as the materials are distributed, it will quickly become difficult to tell who the originators of the action were, protecting them and helping everyone present share a feeling of ownership of the situation. The march should leave as soon as most people have made their way out to join the crowd, and to make this quick it helps if people inside exit the venue en masse or at least in rapid succession. Have a route planned in advance, if possible, perhaps with a surprise somewhere along the way: a crowded district of thrilled onlookers who might join in, or a place where fireworks can be set off or fires

set, or a target worthy of a little property destruction. Lay plans according to the comfort level you anticipate in the participants—this should be a positive experience for them, especially the ones who would never have thought they'd do this.

As soon as illegal activities commence, begin a mental countdown to the time the police can be expected to arrive. Chances are, if they are unprepared for the event, they'll have to hang back, at least for a while, but count on this at your own risk. Make sure you don't fail to think about where to disperse; if a march breaks up in a place where there are few escape routes, the police may take advantage of the opportunity to pick off stragglers, and if it comes back to its point of origin—or even if the police can determine what that was—they will harass people around their vehicles, or at least take license plates and perhaps follow cars. Make sure no one whose name the authorities can get their hands on could convincingly be held responsible for inciting a riot.

There are many pitfalls to be avoided in this kind of action; a "re-routing" gone astray can end catastrophically. Those who initiate it must not trick the crowd, or seek to control it; their role is only to open a door to another situation, to highlight options that were already present. The re-routing must ultimately transpire as an informed, collective choice on the part of those involved; anything less is simply demagoguery, manipulation. It is critical that the action not endanger anyone who is unprepared—there can be risks involved, but they must be easy to recognize for what they are, and it must be up to each individual to choose whether to take them or not. At worst, those conscious of what they are doing can form a buffer zone between the police and the inexperienced or vulnerable, so if anyone gets into trouble it will be people who are prepared for it. It is also crucial that the hijackers not make enemies, nor disrespect or derail projects into which

others have poured well-intentioned efforts. If people do notice the role a person plays in a re-routing, they should feel only gratitude, not fear or resentment—or, for that matter, inordinate admiration. The most accomplished re-routers act without attracting attention to themselves or assuming command over the situation.

Account

The preceding day, the pigs had killed a man they were arresting on shoplifting charges, and that night a radical environmentalist band from a few years back was playing a reunion show. That meant there would be a lot of young people with anarchist leanings in one place, and, as the show was scheduled to end early, there would be a lot of undischarged energy. We decided to take advantage of the opportunity to put the heat on the police, to remind them that there was a whole city of people who were not going to sit idly by while they marauded and murdered with impunity.

Some people worked on a statement to the public, and mass-produced it as a flier. Others collected buckets and sticks. Still others went out to an abandoned house, which still had a pile of firewood under it, and collected the firewood; later that day, that firewood would turn up, wrapped in plastic to keep it dry in the rain, concealed in an unused, inconspicuous downtown doorway.

The show was inordinately expensive, and only two bands were playing; the second was a marching band that most of us were familiar with from their performances at various demonstrations. As people began to arrive at the show (a steady stream of them making their way in the back door, as they felt the door price to be insufferable), we passed out our fliers describing the police killing and outlining our stance on the issue. A couple of us spoke with members of the marching band, telling them about the preceding day's events and asking if they would lead the audience out of the

theater and into the street during their last song. They had done the very same thing at earlier shows, and readily agreed, making it clear however that they wanted to be leaving shortly thereafter.

The headlining band played their reunion set. They were as talented as ever, but somehow it felt like there was something missing, and the particularly macho energy in the male singer's stage presence made some of us uncomfortable. No matter, we figured—it's not the responsibility of others to do things the way we would if we were them, it's our own responsibility to do those things ourselves. So as they played, buckets and drumsticks were stacked up outside, and wheatpaste brewed over camping stoves in the bathrooms. They finished, and the marching band appeared; to those of us who had already had our lives changed by songs about revolution and now were ready to live a little taste of it, it seemed like they would never begin their last number. Finally, they did, and when they passed through the doors of the venue with the audience hesitantly behind them, we were already in the street, banging our improvised plastic drums and heading off down a route that had been hastily charted a couple of hours in advance.

At first the concertgoers dallied around the front of the club—years of concertgoing had taught that the excitement ends when the show is over—but when a few of the rowdier ones joined us, the others followed, and a mass of hundreds swept into the street. A few of us walked in the front, doing our amateur best to beat our makeshift drums in the time with the marching band behind; around them paraded the greater part of the former audience. The tentative remainder, not sure yet how to feel about what was happening, brought up the rear; they were soon joined by small groups of people who came out of the bars to investigate. We hadn't thought much in advance about scouts, an oversight we couldn't have gotten away with in a larger city, but all the same a few of us were on bicycles. It definitely



helped that many of the fans of this band already had years of experience in street demonstrations and similar environments; for them, this was perhaps a welcome relief after a night in a club: the adrenaline of being out in the city, making things happen, reclaiming space with only bravado for a permit. As we proceeded, a few little elves ran around the periphery wheatpasting posters about the events of the previous day on walls, telephone booths, and electrical boxes, so there would be a clear explanation of this event the next morning.

Soon, we reached a central intersection downtown; suddenly, there was a big heap of firewood in the middle of the street, and then—flames. From out of nowhere, street signs—"road closed," "under construction"—appeared, barricading the street. Masked figures with chains were spinning fire, people were clapping their hands and dancing, and the bars were emptying as others came out to see what was going on. Everyone who approached got a flier. The police, finally, started to show up—perhaps twelve cars in total, in two of the four streets; but there was open field on two sides that they lacked the numbers to block, and they had no buses for mass arrests, since this was an unexpected event. Besides, the last thing they needed in the midst of their current public relations debacle was a lot of news about an anti-police demonstration turning into a riot—they were at a serious disadvantage here. Some of the people here had never been in such a situation, and were understandably nervous; but others had more experience in them than any of the police officers present. It seemed, were we possessed of the desire to do so, that we could hold this intersection to dance and sing around the fire for a good part of the night—and there was in fact a precedent for this possibility: such things had happened before in this town.

But then, suddenly, the atmosphere changed. Someone grabbed a megaphone, and shouted, "Scatter! Disperse! Disappear

on the four winds like the anarchists you are!" It was—did you see it coming?—the vocalist from the band playing the reunion, taking charge. Many of us looked up in surprise—our sixth senses, developed through years of gauging situations like this one, told us that there was nothing to fear yet, that this was not the time to retreat. But when a crowd takes over a street or carries off some similarly "impossible" action, all their strength comes from the sense that they can count on each other, all their confidence depends on the confidence of their companions. What a group, acting together, believes to be possible, becomes possible; what some believe impossible, becomes impossible, and thus no one can believe in it to make it otherwise. And so, hearing one prominent personality loudly doubting the possibility of holding the intersection any longer, many suddenly doubted it themselves, and made ready to leave, as if taking orders.

Some of us who had more experience rebelled at this—it was ridiculous for us to leave now, when we sensed no great threat and had barely begun to make our point! This guy wasn't even from here, he had no local perspective, nor any right to make decisions for everyone—and to make things worse, his motives were questionable: "Stop drumming! Do NOT take this back to the venue!" he added, still shouting into the megaphone. Still, the damage was done, and there was nothing to do but make our way out of the intersection with the others—though one last group did pull a dumpster into the middle of intersection and set it on fire as a parting gift. That was lovely to see!

All in all, the night was a success—though, sadly, too late to do any good for the man the police had murdered—and also an important lesson: we must be ever-vigilant, so self-appointed leaders cannot set the limits of our activities for us. Perhaps the bands themselves needed to leave at that point, but for that guy to assume that this meant the event was officially over, or that in their absence the rest of us lacked the

sense to keep ourselves out of jail, was really presumptuous. It may seem ironic that we, having deployed a secret plan of our own that was not exactly "voted for" by all present at the concert, would be frustrated with him for taking it upon himself to seize the reins; but the critical difference is that we never gave any orders—we simply opened a window of possibility, leading with our own bodies and carrying out activities that left room for others to participate in whatever ways they felt comfortable. For a total, self-managed revolution to be possible, every individual must be versed enough in self-determination, and every group experienced enough in quick collective decision-making, that no one can usurp control. In the meantime, those of us who want to see things happen need to be ready to counter self-appointed leaders and "peace police" by presenting other options and keeping them visible and viable at all times. Had we immediately counteracted his instructions by loudly emphasizing that we could all remain in the intersection if we so chose, it would have been more likely that whatever happened next would have been the result of reasoned individual decisions rather than mob psychology.

Speaking of the tensions and occasional contradictions between individual decisions and group decisions—there was a little controversy over the dumpster, which, it turned out, had been the dumpster used by a fair-trade coffee house that hosted liberal and sometimes radical meetings and performances. To my knowledge, no one ever found out if the coffee house was actually inconvenienced by the fire; the dumpster itself was seen in use on another street shortly thereafter, so I seriously doubt there were any consequences for the café. Such minor mishaps are inevitable, but it was humorous what an obvious excuse we'd provided liberals to concentrate their criticisms on our tactics rather than the offences of the powers that be. Maybe next time someone should apply for a grant with which we can rent a dumpster of our own to set afire?



SETTLING FOR THE SYSTEM

HOW PUNKVOTER BECAME JUST ANOTHER TOOL

FOR THE DEMOCRAT PARTY.

By the time this article is printed the US Presidential election will have been and gone. All the same this article asks some important questions of the punk community (and certain contradictions therein), which were exhibited most clearly by the rise of Punkvoter, as such we thought it would be an interesting addition to the 'zine.

**Settling for the System
How PunkVoter.Com Became Just
Another Tool of the Democrats
By SCOTT EVANS, Counterpunch.org**

Although for many of us the last four years have brilliantly demonstrated the undemocratic nature of American democracy, it seems that some radicals have missed their cues. Presented with endemic alienation as a result of the failure of American political structures, most strikingly expressed in the 2000 election, many activists have actually chosen to channel residual anger into the very system that generated it. As the facade of capitalist democracy crumbles, the usual suspects are rallying the public—and preparing to charge, full-force, back into the smoldering rubble.

One such vanguard is Punk Voter (www.punkvoter.com), a coalition of over 130 bands and about 30 independent record labels recently formed with the goal of registering and mobilizing "punk rockers" in the 2004 election. Their site introduces

readers with a reminder that, "Punk rock has always been on the edge and in the forefront of politics". And what could be more edgy than the ballot box?

A quick perusal of Punk Voter's website reveals more than a few ironies. While the layout is typical of the punk subculture—complete with black on red lettering and DIY cut-and-paste imagery—the message is constructed in a clumsy attempt to sound "legitimate". On one page, the Bush administration's policies are derided as "chaotic", a humorous complaint from a group that cites as influences bands like the Sex Pistols ("Don't know what I want / But I know how to get it / I wanna destroy"). Elsewhere in a guest column, Jesse Michaels of Operation Ivy laments that, "if there is a prolonged war as a result of American global aggression, the consequences will come to our nice little suburbs."

Attempts to reconcile youth rebellion with mainstream politics would be funny if the underlying message wasn't so dangerous.

Punk Voter's goal of mobilizing 500,000 youths for the Democratic Party is, at best, a huge misdirection of time and energy or, at worst, a destructive initiative that will serve to strengthen the very political system that punk has made its reputation attacking. Under the pretence of being a force for social change, the punk subculture has

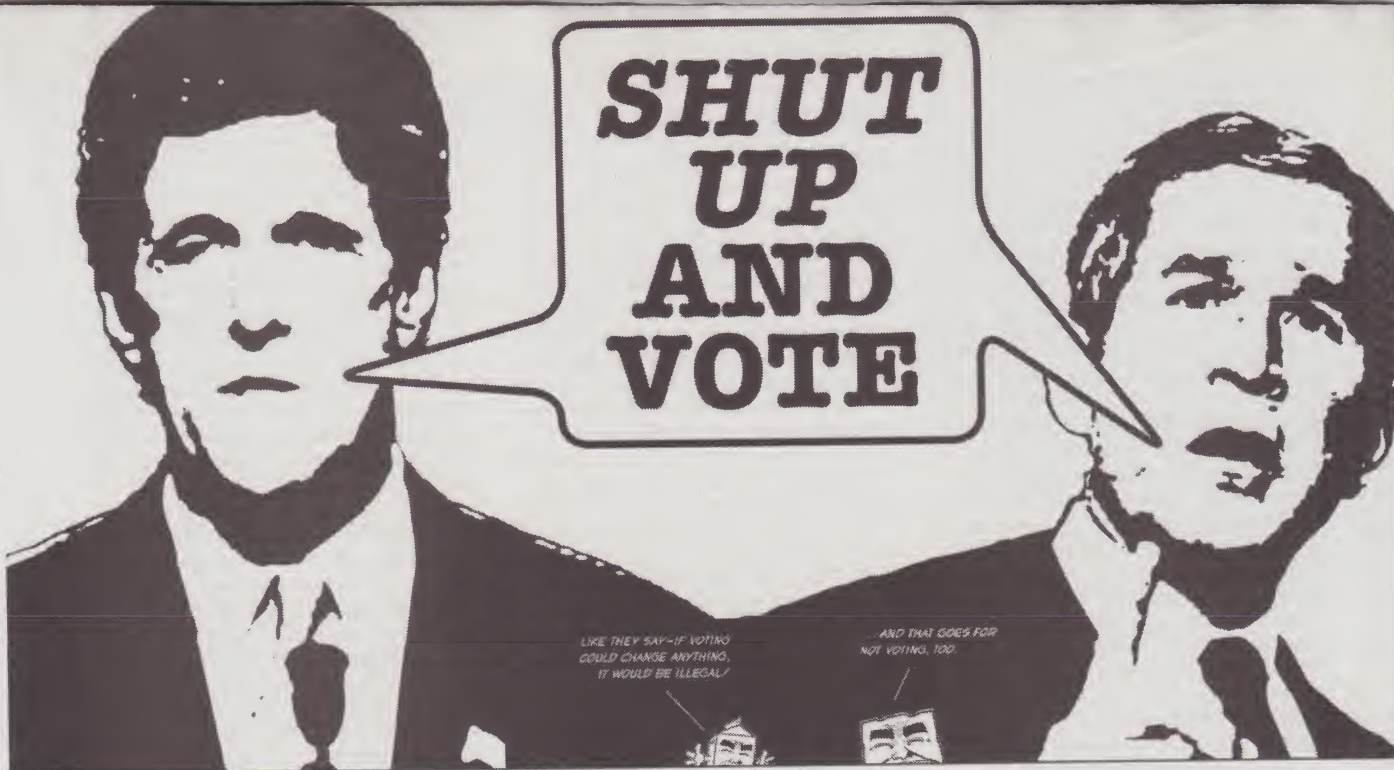
signed up to do capitalism's dirty work by reinforcing the fundamental mythology of representative democracy: The system works—change comes from within.

Indicative of the shift away from punk's tradition of confrontation with capitalism is the fallout that occurred between radical punk band Propagandhi and Mike Burkett [Fat Mike], founder of Punk Voter.

Last March Propagandhi withdrew from Punk Voter's Rock Against Bush Vol. 1 compilation after Burkett requested that they remove a jab at billionaire George Soros from their song contribution. The liner notes to the song stated, "This message not brought to you by George Soros". Burkett explained his request in a post on Propagandhi's website. Although he acknowledged that Soros was involved in selling weapons of war and had "screwed a bunch of countries to make his money", Burkett also noted that Soros was bankrolling "many great organizations such as Moveon.org and America Coming Together, and these organizations help support us." Finally he noted that, "MoveOn [helped push] the 'Uncovered' DVD and it sold 40,000 more copies because of them".

Punk Voter didn't want to step on any toes if doing so would threaten its ability to sell records. So much for punk's independence.





Many radicals will be reluctantly casting a ballot come November. Agreed, though it might be a good idea to discuss strategic voting coupled with a robust skepticism of political parties. But the message that Punk Voter is bringing to its largely politically inexperienced audience is discouragingly artless. Perhaps most conspicuous is Punk Voter's adoption of the "2000-proved-that-every-vote-counts" spin that is being pushed by the Democratic Party. This attempt to rewrite presidential history would lead us to believe that Bush won the election based on 537 votes in Florida rather than rampant election fraud, voter disenfranchisement, and a break down of the electoral system—all of which are well documented.

Mike Burkett is the first to admit that political analysis isn't his strong point. In an interview posted to AlterNet he confesses, "I don't actually read as much as I should because the more I read the more bummed out I get, when I read political books." And so it may come as no surprise that Punk Voter is pushing a perspective without a significant critique to differentiate it from the right-wing Democratic Leadership Council.

Young people who browse punkvoter.com, seeking some direction or insight from the artists that they look up to, will be treated to inane nationalism (American flag imagery,

constant references to "our government", etc) and a regurgitation of tired liberal themes (Nader was responsible for the Republican victory, etc.). Shocking statements like, "We must remember that today's politicians are servants to their constituents..." illustrate Punk Voter's disconnect from the reality of Belt-way politics.

Nowhere is there any discussion of the limitations of representative democracy. Or for that matter, the legal exclusion of 10% of the American electorate (including immigrants, ex-felons, and the homeless), corporate dominance of the political system, the Democratic Party's history of imperialism and warmongering, the Help America Vote Act and the problematic shift toward paperless ballots, or even Kerry's own position on domestic and foreign policy issues.

Senator Kerry's abysmal record has been well covered by a variety of sources, but apparently some people aren't listening. His foreign policy is virtually identical to that of Bush. He supports first strike and unilateral military action in defense of American "interests" (read: "business interests") and has openly called for an escalation of the Iraqi occupation. As a senator, he voted for Plan Colombia and NAFTA. On the home front Kerry supported the Patriot Act, the

Department of Homeland Security, and No Child Left Behind—policies that many of the bands endorsing Punk Voter have vocally rejected!

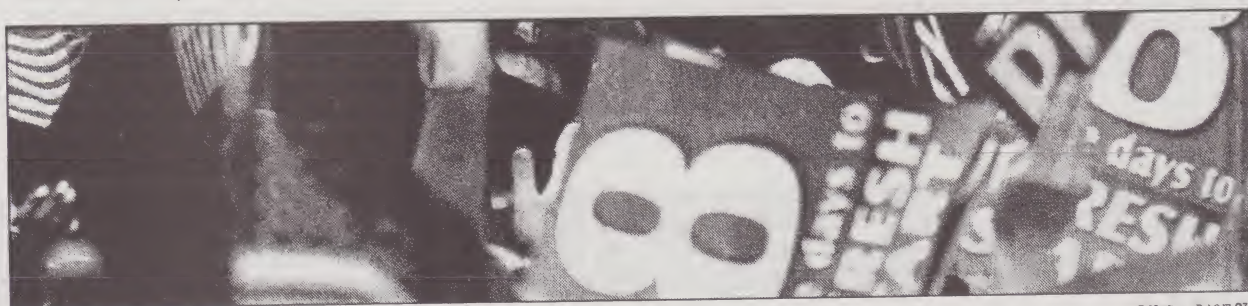
But Burkett says he thinks Kerry is "all right" because "he's a snowboarder and used to play in a band."

Is this what punk is about? If not, it is time that politically conscious music fans hold artists accountable for their duplicitous support of fascism—be it the "conservative" variety espoused by men like Bush or the "liberal" brand of men like Kerry.

Rock Against Bush Vol. 1 sold 20,000 copies in its first week, but one is left wondering what punk icons have really accomplished, self-promotion aside. In a particularly disturbing moment of clarity, Burkett told CNN that, "Bush getting elected was good for punk music. Now people have something to get pissed off about."

Over 10,000 Iraqi civilians killed, but record sales are up.

Scott Evans is an activist from NYC and can be reached at: twentytwelve@riseup.net



"Just try the door with the crowbar."
 "Look Geoff I promise you that won't open."
 This is the third building that we've tried to break tonight. The first one of the evening was a supposedly derelict pub on Pentoville Road. I popped the padlocks, only to be confronted with a fully functional bar. Fuck. Next up was the building I'd pretty much put all my eggs into, which turned out to be burned to a crisp inside. Not very useful. This was the fifth night in a row that we'd been out looking for a building to move into. If it didn't happen tonight then that was it, I was quitting. To top it off the last resort was the most unlikely of all the buildings that we'd scouted. Surely there's no way that Westminster council is going to allow a social centre, and gig venue to operate just off Oxford Street. Surely this building couldn't be empty, and squattable. And how the fuck am I getting away with taking a crowbar out and snapping off a padlock in the heart of London and not getting nicked? Oh well it was our last chance, and I wasn't prepared to let us fail for want of trying. "Seriously Geoff this door is not shifting." I whispered up to my friend.

"What about the window?"
 "What do you mean, 'what about the window'?"
 It's got iron fucking bars in front of it."
 "Just fucking try it Edd."

If there is a god she clearly likes me. Squeezing through the window took me into a new world. 'Fuck this place is massive' I thought to myself as I bounded up the stairs to let Geoff in.

For the next ten or so minutes we hastily explored the building. After ten minutes we were both agreed that it was too big for just two of us to occupy. We agreed we'd get as many of the collective as was possible to get together to come down to occupy the next night. We – stupidly – ignored the locked door on the second floor, and rationalised the bike in the entrance hallway as being something the builders left behind. I replaced the metal grate over the window, and went home to have a long sleep.

The next night we returned.

"Yo Geoff the locked doors open. Oh shit..."

"What is it?"

"There's a light on inside. We've broken into someone else's fucking squat. Fuck!"

Well that was that then. At this point we were only a week away from the first gig. Where the fuck were we gonna find a place in Zone 1 of London big enough to put on this thing in that short of time.

"Why don't we just wait to see if the guy comes back?" offered Ollie.

What a fucking awesome idea. Four hours later, having been accosted by a series of drunks I wasn't holding such warm fuzzy feelings for Ollie.

"Can we just leave him a note."

I was awoken the next morning at the ungodly hour of 10am by Lawrence.

"Hi, I umm got the note that you left on my door."

He rang us back! The man is a walking talking legend. Without Lawrence none of this shit would have happened. He offered us his home, and said that we could do whatever we wanted with it, he was wanting to move out anyway. The place was just too big for one person.

The first meeting that happened in the building occurred the next morning. It was – to put it politely – a bit of a farce. Though ultimately they turned out to be useful to the project we suddenly had a periphery member of the collective bringing in three American kids (Rafah, Robbie and Jason), none of whom any of us had met before. Likewise somehow an invitation was extended to another American kid (Jay) to move in. Ultimately it all turned out OK with all four of them, but there was a serious lack of communication of ideas and ideals. This led to some serious conflict during the week which could have quite easily been got around if there'd be a bit more of exchange at this first meeting about issues such as being a vegetarian/vegan squat and other such nonsense like that. If I could change one thing about the whole event it would have been this, since I think Chris, Tom, Natalie and myself would have felt much less marginalised and less burnt out had we just shared our ideals at the start, and it may have been that 8 Portman Street didn't turn into just a 'hit and run' and could have been turned into a fully fledged social centre.


For the most part differences were kept in check and the hard work of getting the place into a condition to have gigs in started. The first job though was to get mattresses so we

furniture, except for an uncomfortable leather 'thing', and two rickety office chairs. We did manage to "find" (I think we actually stole it, but who can tell in situations such as these) a nice table for the distros to set up on.

Electricity proved to be easy. The builders had desecrated the company's heads (the bit where the mains feeds into most buildings) in both buildings, but they'd rigged up their own fuse box running off the mains in the room we were going to have the gig in. Perfect. The lights were equally as simple with metres and metres of industrial electrical cable, with light sockets which just 'clipped' in. It only took us two hours to run the thing around the house.

Soundproofing too wasn't as hard as I had assumed it might be. 100 destroyed Madball posters later [at least the band's useful for something hey!] and we had pretty sound proofed windows. With a wood panel on top, and carpet above that no sound was gonna get out. Nor for that matter was any heat. Even if you were just two people chatting in the room you started to break into a sweat.

"So what exactly do we do if we have 300 people show up wanting to see Five Knuckle?" It was a fair question – but I'm still not sure any of us know what the answer is. We only had space for – at the very most – 150 in the



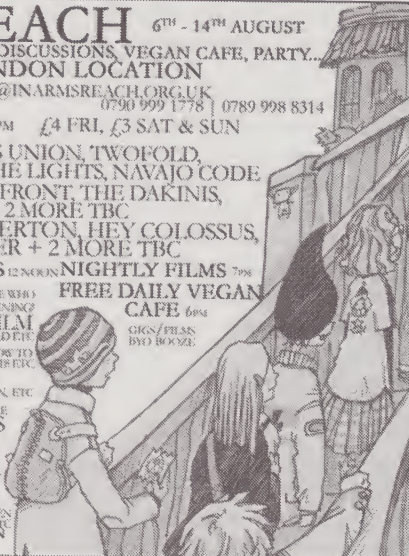
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 SAT 7TH AUG - CANDY SNIPER, SILENT FRONT, THE DAKINIS, AMONG THE MISSING + 2 MORE TBC
 SUN 8TH AUG - JETS VS SHARKS, CHILLERTON, HEY COLOSSUS, FUCKING BIG MONSTER + 2 MORE TBC

COOL STUFF DAILY WORKSHOPS 12 NOON
 MON 9TH AUG - ZINE MAKING DAY (EVERYONE WHO'S SHOWN UP PLAN & MAKE A ZINE TOGETHER TO GIVE OUT IN THE EVENING)
 RADICAL MAINSTREAM FILM
 TUE 10TH AUG - SCREEN PRINTING (LEARN HOW TO MAKE YOUR OWN T-SHIRT WITH SHIRTIFIER)
 PUNK DOCUMENTARIES
 WED 11TH AUG - PUNK PIZZA (BRING FOODS TO SHARE)
 ZOMBIE HORROR MOVIES
 THU 12TH AUG - GRAFFITI/STENCILING
 SKATE DOCUMENTARIES
 FRI 13TH AUG - INFO FOR ACTION (ACT UP! LIVING FOR FREE, EFFECTIVE, PROTEST, RADICAL, CHALLENGING, ETC.)
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could actually get some sleep at night. To the hotel.

"What the fuck do you think you're doing?"

Tom and me looked at each other and kind of shrugged our shoulders.

"We're taking this mattress out of your skip. It seems to be stuck on something though" said Tom, "Would you like to give us a hand?"
 "Get out of the skip before I ring the cops." Oh well. I suppose its not like he minced his words.

An hour later with four more sets of hands we finally liberated not one, but three mattresses from that skip. Success! Distinctly unsuccessful though was the hunt for furniture. Normally sofas, chairs, and the like abound across the whole of London. For some reason though the first two weeks of August saw a complete drought on all forms of

main gig space, and that's if somehow no-one started collapsing because of heat exhaustion.

"Maybe we could just lie and say we don't know anything about a gig." Chris proposed. I think this was the best idea any of us came up with.

"What about the floors? Are they actually going to hold 150 people?"

"Well we're not gonna know until we try are we Natalie." Put in Bob.

Thankfully the floor didn't collapse, and 300 hundred people didn't show up. Five bands managed to – eventually – show up (though one band needed to be shouted at to get them out of the pub and down to the building). 150 punters appeared. And it was 42 degrees Celsius in the room when Fireapple Red

IN ARMS REACH COLLECTIVE



OUR BUILDING: 8 PORTMAN STREET. 30 SECONDS FROM OXFORD STREET.

played. It was so hot and sweaty that my camera lens lasted 15 seconds before it fogged up. And somehow we managed to get the best sounding PA system that I've ever come across in London, whilst also having all the kit we needed and not getting hassled by the cops (well at least not until after the gig had finished). It's the best show I've ever seen Five Knuckle play.

Having the main event on the first day was a bit of a mistake though. Everyone who had spent the past few weeks of their life doing little other than IAR stuff kinda let out a huge sigh of relief and had a long lie in the next day.

"Look we need to get the place tidy, cook food, and get the new PA sorted in just over five hours." Chris tersely pointed out.

Four of us – everyone else had conveniently disappeared – got the place tidy just in time for other problems to start.

"So where's the snare stand?" Asked Linds from the Dakinis.

"The snare uhh umm... I'll be back in two minutes." "Fuck. Where is everybody anyway" I thought as I ran around desperately looking for something that I had no idea of what it looked like. "Umm Linds I'm not sure we uhh have one. Is that gonna be a problem?"

"Don't worry I'll ring my friend and he'll bring mine from home." Man, I fucking love DIY punks.

Just when I think I can relax, and go ring people to shout at them to get to the building to help out, to man the doors, and get food, Tim ex-Soon The Darkness approaches me with that look on his face.

"Umm, Edd we seem to have lost our bassist."

"Oh... Do you have any idea where you've lost

him?"

"Well he's on the tube somewhere."

"Oh, ok. You know you're on in like twenty minutes?"

A quick re-jig of the line up thankfully made it possible for Among The Missing to get at least a twenty minute set when their bassist finally appeared. And equally good was the fact that a couple of others finally did show up so that I didn't end up with a nervous breakdown.

The next night was slightly less eventful, with all the bands appearing on time, and playing amazing sets. It's again the best that I've seen Jets Vs Sharks play, and at least Tim ex-STD got to play a full set with his other band Fucking Big Monster.

The rest of the week was not as amazing as most of us had hoped. All our attention and energy had gone on making the gigs happen, so when it came to Monday and we suddenly realised we had to do five days worth of workshops, vegan cafes, and film nights we all collectively realised how little we'd organised. Rafah took charge of the café and somehow managed to make sure that food appeared each evening. The workshops were less impressive. Our zine workshop went well largely I think because a lot of self-motivated people showed up, and somehow we managed to bash out a 20 page zine by the end of the day. The screen printing workshop went less well the next day when Em, Natalie, and myself realised that we hadn't really thought at all about the logistics of teaching ten people how to screen print all at once, and that we didn't even have the photo emulsion we'd need to develop the screens. Despite looking like complete fools we did

manage – I think – to teach a couple of people how to screen print. Though I did comically manage to fuck up my friend's screen by advising him to leave it in the direct sunlight for twenty minutes, not noticing that *all* the emulsion had hardened I took it down with him to the shower to wash it out, and was perplexed at why the water wasn't washing through. Never one to give up easily – largely because I'm not smart enough – I took the screen back upstairs to try and print something, only umm the ink wouldn't go through the screen. Whoops. Wednesday, which was supposed to be the 'Punk picnic' day didn't really happen, though quite a few people showed up for the evening's zombie horror movies, where we made the mistake of showing the Italian movie 'Nights of Horror' rather than the (so bad it's good) 80's 'Dead Heat'. Thursday – the stencilling/ graffiti day – also didn't really happen, though the skate movies in the evening were once again well attended. Friday – the day to discuss direct action – led to a good conversation between people who believe that direct action is the only way to make change, and those who think it's just violence. Direct action won out, and a small group of us went out stencilling Oxford Street that night.

The less said about the party on Saturday the better.

A compilation of articles made up of members of IAR is going to be appearing before Christmas. There are also plans afoot to put on an event at the end of January, where our workshops will hopefully be slightly more organised! email info@inarmsreach.org.uk.

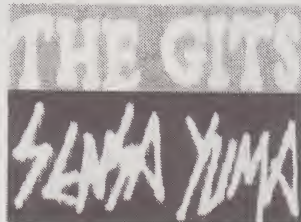
THE FIRST WEEKS OF AUGUST SAW THE IN ARMS REACH COLLECTIVE'S FIRST PROJECT TO COME TO FRUITION. THE PLAN WAS TO HAVE THREE DAYS OF GIGS, AND THEN A WEEK FILLED WITH WORKSHOPS, FILMS AND DISCUSSIONS, ENDING WITH A KICK-ASS PARTY AND RAD MEMORIES FOR ALL INVOLVED. OBVIOUSLY IT DIDN'T GO THAT PERFECTLY. THIS IS ONE PERSON'S ACCOUNT OF THE WEEK.

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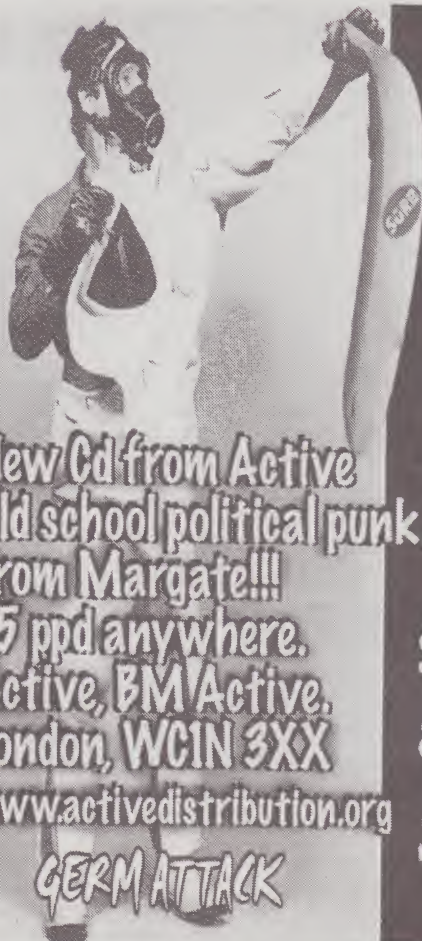
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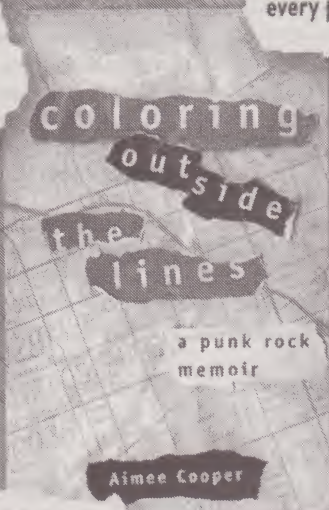
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So Lins was buying records, and going to shows whilst I was still in nappies. Break it Up are an amazing band playing no-bullshit 80s hardcore. You probably already know who they are. If you don't you need to check this shit out! This was a rather rushed email cause deadlines (which then disappeared cause of printer issues) were pressing up against us, I think it still gives a pretty good idea of what Lins and Break It Up are about though!

RN: Name(s) and role within the band:
BIU: Lins - mutha fucken Vocals.

RN: How did releasing the 7" on Anger Management Records come about? Did you not want to release new material (i.e. not off the demo)?

BIU: Basically we had a couple of email requests from Europe about putting out the demo onto either tape or vinyl. We opted for the vinyl version with Anger Management as it would get out to more people on the mainland, plus AM is a label that we support due to its DIY ethic. The main reason it was re-released was because we only made 100 CD-Rs and 30 limited tapes and we had the offer to get more out by a label that was kind enough to do that. New material will be out on a Dead and Gone release in the very near future so look out for that when it eventually drops.

RN: When you guys played "Edgeday" in Sheffield, Lins made a speech about Bush and Blair being dicks. Do you feel that hardcore/punk bands should address politics in these times?

BIU: Ok since you're referring to what I said I'll basically go on record as saying that take away politics or general anger towards the world situation then HC turns into any other crappy music genre that deals with just personal issues or candy fed issues! I like to call things the way I see them and if that means saying that Bush and Blair are dicks then I'll do it. I wouldn't say that politics is the sole agenda for BIU because it isn't,

but it is a topic that will be raised as and when we feel the need to address our disapproval or agreement with things. I honestly believe that if you are not touched or motivated to write or speak about politics then what else is there to shout and get angry about....

RN: You guys are often compared to seminal Orange County hardcore acts like Insted and No For An Answer. Would you rather be from California or Newcastle? Do you think where you're from has had an influence on your sound/lyrics?

BIU: (Laughs) I think it's a non issue, I guess that Orange County has its pluses, but so does Newcastle and you know as the saying goes, 'the grass is always greener at home'. But having not experienced Orange County I can't really say which I would prefer. Obviously for the HC scene then I would go with OC but I guess it's more than just music! I really don't think where we are from has any bearing on our sound. We wrote songs with the intention of recapturing the 80's sound that we all love and grew up with it just so happens it has an OC feel to it which is cool by us! Plus Insted is one of my favourite bands period!

RN: Some of the members of your band have wracked up some hard time involved in hardcore. How does the current UK hardcore scene compare to some of the other "high" points you've been through? What kinda things can be done, if any, to avert the troughs that will follow this peak? BIU: Well if you're talking about how good or big the UK scene is at the moment then yes I would agree it's certainly hitting the peak of activity at present with a lot of kids that are active and making a difference. The problem is that this has happened so many times over the years that being an older guy you kind almost expect it to dip at any given moment. I have always maintained that it's not the size of the scene but the quality that counts and as long as kids are into it for the right reasons then hopefully it will prosper. In comparison to the 80s, the scene now is totally different in many aspects, I mean it's easier to get involved in and participate in HC, due to the electronic age (i.e. the internet etc), it's easier to contact other people, it's easier to get hold of records and also find out what they sound like before you click that purchase button...anyway you get my drift. There isn't as much going out and finding out and doing stuff on your own back!

RN: Your song "Break it Up" is a declaration of your intent to stay true to your roots and hardcore yet "Why Can't it Last?" would seem to be indicating at being kind of fed up with hardcore. Have you ever reached the point where you feel like dropping out yourselves? If so, what made you realise you couldn't do without it?

BIU: Well just to clear matters up "Why Can't it Last" is actually about a relationship I had many years ago that left a huge impression on my life at the time. But to answer the question I think anyone that has been involved in HC over the years that is still around has had a period of reflection where they have asked whether they still enjoyed being involved in HC. I mean I personally have never got to the stage where I've said 'that's it, I've had enough of this shit', I mean yeah I've been disheartened by certain aspects of the core but when I think about it in greater depth I see what I have achieved through being involved and that normally fires me up to get over any discrepancies I have come across within HC.

RN: You have an LP coming out on the UK's very own Dead & Gone Records. Can we expect more of the same or are Break it Up gonna go rock n roll, SSD/Bad Brains style? Do you feel that hardcore should (or indeed, has to) progress or should it retain its retrospective edge?

BIU: You know the reason, as I already stated to start BIU, was to recapture the 80's sound feel for kids that have grown up on American Nightmare, Earth Crisis or even Converge. I'm not saying that those bands suck, but we wanted to play what we are comfortable with and what more importantly, that we enjoy. If it means kids checking out some awesome 80's bands or even some of the new retro bands the I'm all for it as this is your roots.

RN: When Lins was interviewed by Murder Contest fanzine, he said he would refuse to be interrogated by the Kerrangs and Metal Hammers of this world. Do you feel that hardcore should be radically anti-mainstream? Do you believe that it should be a counter-culture rather than a subculture?

BIU: I said that because I have had experience of being interviewed by the mainstream press and on those occasions I was misquoted or basically just had a bunch of downright lies written. So with that in my mind my outlook has been tarnished enough for me not to get involved with them again. I'm speaking on a personal level here so if any of the other guys in BIU felt the need to converse with them then I would say my piece but let them get on with it. We are a democratic band in every sense of the word. Also I feel that Kerrang! and Metal Hammer are bastardising the HC scene and trying to formulate their own version of it so that they can ultimately sell more copies of their shitty mags. They were never interested in HC in the early days so how come all of a sudden they are now?

RN: Your song "Planned Attack" talks about confronting those who talk shit on you behind your back/online. Do you think that physical confrontation is justified within

BREAK IT UP BREAK IT UP BREAK IT UP



BREAK IT UP BREAK IT UP BREAK IT UP

hardcore under certain circumstances or should we "break it up" (heh) and it can all be sorted out with words?

BIU: Listen it depends on the situation really, I mean I 100% do not promote or actively encourage violence within any walk of life, but saying that, if I feel the need to defend myself I will take that option. The song 'planned attack' was written about the many anonymous keyboard warriors that like to talk shit about people and not care about the consequences. By that I mean that some people can be really hurt by some of the shit I have seen posted and I feel that if you have major beef with someone then have the balls to say it to their face and sort it out like human beings rather than resort to childish behaviour. Physical confrontation is a trait of life and it really depends on the circumstances that it is being brought forward to determine whether or not it is justified.

RN: Can you foresee yourselves being involved in hardcore when you're using zimmer frames and pissing in a bag? Do

you feel that youth (at least in the heart, if not physically) is an essential part of hardcore/punk, or does it not matter how old one feels?

BIU: Well if you'd asked me when I was 16 and first experiencing HC if I would still be involved nearly 18 years later then I would have laughed, but HC is something that has been a major part of my life. Its not just music to me anymore but the way I have shaped and lived for years now. The youthful energy is certainly a major factor that keeps me going and also all of the great memories that I have attained over the years, nothing will take that away. I can honestly say that I will be involved in HC in some factor as I get even older! Its a way of life to me now! I will only give up on HC when I find it totally diluted or boring which hasn't happened yet and hopefully won't happen anytime soon.

RN: What's your feelings on the theory that hardcore died in 1986? Does it irritate you when people claim that hardcore isn't punk?

BIU: Alright, I guess you are referring to the Stephen Blush book? Anyway that is basically a crock of shit and only his personal opinion, I mean there were some awesome and defining early 80s bands but as time progressed there were some equally as important and defining bands. You could refer to any music scene and say, 'Well I think that between whatever dates that was the best time' its all just a matter of personal opinion. Lets face it after 86 we had some damn good bands appear and to this day we are still getting awesome bands appearing.

Interview: Alan. Photos: Sheep (xsheepx.com). Break It Up have an EP out on Anger Management Records from Belgium. They're gonna be releasing an LP on everyone's favourite Dead and Gone records in the near future. The band gotta website at www.breakitup.co.uk...



Q and Not U are part of the intelligentsia of punk rock. I had the chance to chat at length, and using particularly long words, with the band, about DIY, touring and their politics when they played the Camden Underworld in July.

N: If you could just say your name and say what you play that would be cool

Chris: My name is Chris Richards. I play guitar and sing and play bass and keyboards and other stuff.

Harris: My name is Harris. I play guitar and sing and play keyboard and other stuff.

John: I'm John and I play the drums.

N: Cool. How's the tour gone?

C: It's been good. We were just talking about this with someone else. This will be 6 shows altogether in the UK and last night in Bristol was probably the best. It was on this ship, in the harbour and it was really cool. Harris said to me just before the show, 'just imagine if all the music we were making was reverberated through the water and all the fish could hear it.' That was our favourite show and I felt that the crowd were really alive last night.

N: You've got the new album coming out, when will that be?

C: It's due out mid September, beginning of October.

N: So, it's a little while away.

J: It doesn't seem like a long way to me though.

H: Yeah, we have been working on it and thinking about it for probably a good year so far. What you just witnessed - the handing over of the test pressings and the proofing of the artwork - is sort of our last step

hopefully and it feels like its coming to an end to us and it will coming out shortly.

N: What sort of direction is the music going? I was just speaking to someone from Southern and they said...

C: What did they say?

N: They said it was a bit more poppy, and less indie.

C: Yeah. [laughs]

N: They said you had recorders as well.

C: Well it's not a guitar or a rock record, in really any way.

J: It wasn't a decision, it just happened naturally in a way

C: We have a bunch of instruments in our practice space and we just do whatever we feel and for some reason there just aren't many guitary songs on the album. Harris just went into this synthesiser heaven.

H: Yeah, well I just got to the point, because in the last record we wrote a song that I started playing keyboards on and I never played piano or anything like that and I was really bad. I was a terrible keyboard player and over the course of the last few years touring so much and playing that song I've felt a new level comfort, it was really fun. To be able to actually play it, and come up with what I thought were interesting ideas so I sort of gravitated towards that stuff.

N: Has it got more of an experimental feel to it.

H: I would say a less experimental feel than our past records. It's more like... umm I don't know...

C: I feel that the songs are the most poppy of any songs that we have done but probably also more sonically adventurous. It doesn't

sound like guitars, bass and drums so much. I think we tried to get a lot of different textures going on but I think there are plenty of hooks in it. I think that is just a symptom of listening to a lot of funk music and soul music and pop music. It just gets into your bloodstream and that's what we are attracted to. I've had a really super intense relationship with the music of Prince for the past year and a half and that kinda came out for me at least.

H: I also feel that lyrically it is the most experimental thing we have ever done. I always felt, in terms of my songs, I'd always have a line that would come up and I'd be like ok, I'll just write around this line, whereas with this record with the song that I wrote the lyrics for I had this idea of something that I really wanted to write a song about and I sort of pursued that a little for forcefully. I get that impression from Chris's lyrics, and the way we sing them, the songs lyrically are a lot more considerate that anything we've ever done which I think is an interesting move.

N: I was going to ask about your lyrics. I find them quite interesting. They are quite poetic but also trains of thoughts. What are you trying to convey with them?

C: The party line for me is that usually I like to have something that people are engaged by. I think a lot of songs that are very cut and dry, although I love songs like that, are engaging in a different way and I like things you have to investigate a little more. So that's where I've been coming from in terms of writing records for this band since we started five, six years ago. But I think on this record, Harris is right, I try to address things a little

Q & NOT U

bit more directly. There are songs about my family and a song about my city, just things that are a little more personal. Also too I hope I have framed them in a way that they are evocative enough to be more than just that.

I saw this really great lecturer when I was at college by this artist. He made these very diaphanous paintings, and they were very big and people at the lecturer were asking him, 'what is this about, what does it mean?' He was saying when you come to any piece of art, whether its music, writing, whatever, it a huge window, and then once someone explains to you what it means, where they are coming from, the window just gets snapped out. Its like a snapshot. He was just much more interested in having that whole image there available for you and you can just go wherever you want with it. That's how I feel about music in general too. But at the same time maybe this time around maybe there is a bit more direction to it too. Its all very abstract.

J: I think its still pretty difficult to discern, if you don't know what they are about as the writer.

N: That's quite interesting though, the analogy about the window. When the art world is so open to interpretation, so how do you feel about people interpreting your lyrics in perhaps the way that you didn't mean?

C: I think its beautiful. It gives some of the most exciting feedback from people. For instance Soft Pyramid, this guy came up to me at a show in California, and if you are ever driving down the Pacific Coast highway and it starts fogging, the streetlights there

make a pyramid shape on the highway. He was like 'soft pyramids is great, I really love how you are talking about driving on the Pacific Coast highway and seeing the soft pyramids in the fog,' and he just assumed that was what I was talking about because that was his world view and I was like 'well that was totally not what I was talking about at all' but just to know that that image translated into something in his own reality was really beautiful to me, and that's what I feel 'Brown Eyed Girl' or something like that can't do. Granted Brown Eyed Girl might be a great song and can do other things but its cool that people can bring their own experiences to it. Its empowering in a way. That's the way I feel about punk rock, it empowers you to a certain degree. I'd hope the lyrics will do that rather than confuse people.

I think you have to have evocative images, or be saying something forcefully or have these images that will pull people in a little bit. Otherwise, you are just spouting off language.

J: I can't say I agree though about it having to be more abstract in order for it to be something that you can relate to.

C: Oh absolutely.

J: If anything a song as simple as 'Love Me Do,' if anything more people can relate to that. It's certainly more immediately relatable. It could be a love song by Paul McCartney, or it could even be Ohio by Neil Young. Where there is this really simple political statement, if anything, I get most moved by those kind of songs, as opposed to things that are more obscure or obtuse. There can be fragments of songs where its 'nonsensical' but I think most bands, even

if I can't figure out their lyrics on first listen, I know they are not just bullshitting. They are talking about something.

We get that question a lot, not so much anymore because I think people are used to it, but they ask what do your lyrics mean, do they mean anything. I think people are a little more used to the fact now that our lyrics are a little more obtuse or vague at first.

C: I think that people can definitely relate to didactic songs or story telling songs for sure, but I like the idea of if you say 'Love Me Do,' people can be like that reminds me of my hospital stay or something.

J: yeah I totally agree with that. For instance the song 'Are you a Believer' by The Make-up reminds me of when I was getting stitches in my head.

C: Why?

J: Because that was what was in my head when I getting stitches.

C: But that isn't to do with the lyrics.

J: I guess but there are all kinds of ways of something like 'Love Me Do' can mean something, I don't think those are separate things. But 'Are you a Believer' is a good example because its like are you a believer in what? Its totally wide open. The sentence is a little more direct and that's where I feel we're getting a little more closer to.

C: Right

J: I have a theory on what are you a believer is about but I don't know if that's what they are talking about. I have a theory and I think I'm right but I who knows. I'd hazard a guess. I like the idea of having the lyrics wide open to anything, to any way of interpretation but I don't feel that's the only way to do it.

N: So you are still working with Dischord and Ian Mckaye. How is that?

C: It's been great. Ian's been like a really awesome mentor with us personally and musically. He's the biggest cheerleader that we have and he really believes in our music so we are really lucky to work with him. Dischord - it's a great situation because you are pretty much free to do what you want and they are amenable for trying anything that we really want to try. Which is really great. A lot of labels have a real regimented way of working, and they do too, but I think they know that we want to grow and try different stuff and they are willing to go down that route with us and we are not on their ride. We are doing what we do and they have our back so it's a really great situation to be in.

N: It's interesting that you used the word mentor. Do you feel that you are the next generation to come through with a very different sound? And to use the word mentor it suggests a generation gap which obviously there is.

C: I don't know, I think music is always changing.

J: He's a mentor in the sense that Ian and other people who have been around since the early eighties and late seventies like Don Zienita who does the engineering on our record and other people that we have learned a lot from that are maybe younger than Ian but who are older than us. It's just the way it goes in the music scene. You learn from people who were there before you so it can be as far back as Ian and Don and Bad Brains and Teen Idols and all that, or it could be as recently as bands like Jawbox who we learned a lot from also.

H: Or even someone like El Guapo who our age, who we are learning from who are our peers pretty much.

C: Not to sound corny but I feel the music scene in Washington is in essence like a family. People watch out for each other, support each other and take care of each other. It's cool.

H: We definitely learned a lot on a music level and certainly on a personal level from different people in all those bands. People our age, people who sometimes older, people who are way way older like Don and Ian.

[Laughter]

H: It's something you don't always think about either, how we all impact on each other.

N: Do you feel privileged to be part of the DC scene?

C: You don't really think about it so much because it's just the world you are in. I have a very good relationship with my parents, but I don't sit when I go to bed every night and go 'gosh aren't my parents the greatest, I'm so lucky to have supportive parent.' It's just natural. There are times when you reflect and go 'wow I really am lucky.'

It's something you appreciate more when you see bands who are going through hardships with their label or they feel alienated from their city or whatever but that is when I really start to cherish what we found in Washington and where we grew up. At the same time it just feels natural. I don't wake up every morning and go 'I'm so blessed,' although maybe I should.

J: Reflecting upon it, definitely, I do make a point in my life when ever it occurs to me. It's little things that I like to think about. I'm so glad that everyone is here right now or I'm so glad that I can do this. I just was thinking about it, I don't know it was this morning or yesterday but people have been asking a lot about Dischord and about DC on this same thing. And it's something that yeah we are really lucky. Our friends here who we are touring with are like wow you got to see Slant 6 eight times and you saw Hoover ten times, that's pretty fucking lucky. But we just happened to have been born in the right time and in the right place to have been able to see Fugazi as many times as I have and to know whoever. It's great and I feel really lucky to be doing it.

N: That's cool. I was looking on your website and you have got links to Indymedia and things like that as well as more lefty media sites. Is that really important to you guys?

C: I think definitely. Right now things are really fucked up with everything that is going on in America and the youth there. A whole generation is taught to feel that they don't have a choice, or they are just misinformed by the American media. I think it has really led the public astray. If people are interested in our music we are just trying to make information available and let people know there are media outlets other than Cable News Networks and Rupert Murdoch. It's just to give people more options.

J: Especially because with a lot of younger people who like our band they don't automatically know. I think the idea behind doing that was that it was a good way for someone who just randomly clicks on any of these things to absorb some information and make their own decisions based on that. The thing is they aren't opinions that are readily available in the mainstream which is the well from which most people get their information. It's mainstream news sources like CNN or Fox or MTV or People magazine. C: Or your parents.

J: The readily available news sources are not sufficient. We think it's fairly important, and even if we don't agree with everything that is on every one of these websites it's just important for people to have more resources to gather information from. C: We've also met a lot of people on tour who want to get political involved or feel that they are not entitled to have a position on any issues because they feel that they don't know enough about them so we want to do

anything we can to help provide people with information.

J: I like having them there for me! My web browsers has all these ready linked in it. The more information we can have the better.

N: Speaking to people from America I'm always really shocked that they look at things like the Guardian and the BBC which to me aren't even that unbiased.

H: Yeah, I mean I religiously watch BBC news every night because it's the only way to find out what's going on outside America that involves Americans. But yeah, I've talked to a few Brits who are like 'you read The Guardian? Really?'

J: There are no unbiased news sources. It doesn't matter, it's not going to happen. But, the good thing about reading The Guardian or the BBC website is that they give an alternate viewpoint. That's why we put Al Jazeera website on our page. We don't necessarily agree with everything they do. I mean I think they lack taste pretty often but I think it's important for people to know that there are different ideas out there.

I think most Americans in general really suffer from a lack of different viewpoints and that is a battle that has been raging in the United States about regulations of how many radio stations, of how many televisions, of how many newspapers one company can own. There are certain towns where four companies own all of the media sources.

N: Do you think that is part of the American psyche. The attitude towards other people and an American way. It seems quite narrow, is that part of the way people are brought up, to be selfish and individualistic?

C: I think you can maybe blame some of that on the lack of information that people are getting but I don't think that the majority of Americans are narrow minded.

J: Are you talking shit about my country? [laughter]

C: I think it's true. I think that perception gets out of hand. I think the main population of Americans that I think are maybe doing the most harm to the way democracy works in our country are the people who don't care and they don't care because they are misinformed. I think that's more harmful than extreme right wing fundamentalist Christian whatever rednecks. That's not even the majority of the population. The people who are really harming the democracy are people who do have compassion for their community. They are good people but they just feel, I don't know, intimidated by the lack of information they are getting about what is going on in the world. They are not participating in what's going on because they just don't know what's going on. That's really harmful and that's where I think media consolidation is really doing the most harm.



J: I don't think that its so much that Americans or even the traditional American thinking is to be narrow minded. For lack of better expression its come to be numb minded or no minded. There's these blinders in a sense of you know 'I've just got so much to deal with, my life is so hectic already, I can't be worried about children in Iraq or worried about what my government does, as long as I'm paying my rent and I've got my cable TV and two cars, I've just got to take care of me first'. So that's maybe more of the problem. I think that's what we are learning most about Americans. They are right in the middle. They will go whichever way the wind blows. That's why America is changing right now and why people are feeling Kerry is going to win, because mainstream America is drifting against Bush, but who knows what way it is going to blow in the next few months.

N: It's interesting what you said about the American people focusing on their own lives. It's also something I see in British culture.

C: I would agree with that to some degree. I do feel that American culture is a selfish culture. It's unfortunate. I think people are personally compassionate towards one another whether it be on the street or whatever. But I don't think they apply that to their world view. It's interesting that everyone is worried about how many hours they are putting into their jobs but I don't know what it will take to can change that. It's kind of a symptom of capitalism. So much of it is based on what you own and what you are making.

H: I think a large part of it is also based on the idea that America is so young compared to the rest of the world and the rest of the Western World and industrial culture. And two, America is on it's own in a way. It's by itself to a certain degree in the world. In Europe, England has it's own thing but France is right across the water. There's all these really stitched cultures, they are all together and have to deal with each other, whereas America is like this 8000 pound Gorilla sitting in the Western Hemisphere. And that's who we are. Not to say Canadians don't have their own thing going on or Mexican culture isn't strong but we are definitely the dominant force.

C: Sure, that's the way the governments feels. And that's the way Americans are taught to feel. My mom grew up in rural Minnesota and my Grandfather was a WW2 veteran. The values she was instilled with as a kid were good values and loving values but also that the idea that you were living in the greatest place in the world, the most privileged place in the world and you should be thankful for it and you should stick up for it. The dialogue I've been having with her for the past three years since Bush took office is really about if you really believe that, if you do you really think America is the greatest place in the World and you think

it's so privileged then you need to challenge ideas that are hurting the culture. Its' not like this blind patriotism too. I think it's a real conflict.

On paper, there are a lot of righteous American values. On paper I agree with that stuff. Being proud of your country, that's wonderful, working together for the common good, that's great, being compassionate to the world, fantastic. But I think the way our government implements their practices, they use all of those ideas and block Americans off from what's really going on. They will defend everything they are doing using those buzz words when in actuality they are exploiting all the values they are supposed to be promoting, which is a pity. But that's another thing about the media, because the media is not going to challenge them on that. They are just complicit with that whole attitude and people just end up feeling that War on Iraq is the righteous thing to do. That we're creating a democracy there or whatever which is pretty much a totally fallacy. We're destroying that country.

J: I think in making a democracy there, its the same way the US governments props up other governments. It's the same way the US government has done to other countries like Chile or wherever. It's about having a pro US government in that region so essentially the US has a satellite in that region.

N: It's interesting what you said about people taught that America is the best. People of my grandfathers generation were taught that the British Empire was best. But now people of my generation have greater feelings of a guilt complex but maybe America hasn't caught that.

C: Right. Maybe it will, who knows. I definitely feel wherever you are you should love, I mean I love America, not because of the way the government indulges in its practices, but I love the American people and I love the culture in that I have been raised and things like that, and I feel every culture should feel that way. The thing is I think government exploits those feelings.

H: The government is not the people. Touring through Europe a few years people were like 'all Americans are shit,' but well no Americans aren't shit. The American government does some really shitty things in the name of American people I think its too easy to confuse those two things.

C: Its problematic too because the whole government is saying that 'American's are behind us' which is not true.

J: That is part of the problem. A lot of people outside of the United States assume that everyone in America is in favour of this because that is what they have read in their magazines or their newspapers. I think for people outside of the United States, its their duty as well to find other news sources. They are just getting fed lies too. There definitely is a part of the United States or a contingent

that is in favour of war and is pro Bush but there is definitely a huge contingent that is not and has been against the war. Not everyone has gone along with it. You only need to check the protests against the war.

C: We had a huge protest against the war. We all went to the war protest last April and a friend of ours had his friends from Germany writing him an email saying thanks for going to the protest. It got more media coverage in Berlin than it did in DC.

J: And with Bush his spin on it was 'that's great. I'm out here fighting for their rights to be able to do that.' Him and the administrations take on those protests was of arrogance. Cheney, Bush, Rumsfeld are definitely very arrogant. They are businessmen and they are hawks but that's how they have gotten where they are, that and family ties. They feel the United States is a business and I'm the CEO and they feel that in order to succeed they have to be cut throat. You can't be a wimp and you can't worry about humanitarian things. You have to make as much money as possible and that's how they view it.

N: Just quickly to go back to what you said about loving America. I always get a bit concerned about patriotism and nationalism and those sorts of things.

C: Well, Do you love punk rock?

N: Yeah, but I wouldn't say punks are better than whatever.

C: It's not a superiority thing. I don't say America is the best meaning it is better than Italy. It's just loving where you're at. I love music and I think you should love the culture that you are a part off. It feels good and we can support each other. Of course I'm totally fascinated by other cultures and I love travelling and I love music from all different cultures of the world. Absolutely. But I do love where I'm at.

DC scene for instance, I care about those people. Do I love the DC scene, absolutely I do and I feel patriotic about DC or whatever. But I feel a lot of those things have been co-opted by power structures and I don't feel that way at all. Its just a culture of people who I love very dearly.

J: I mean I remember before September 11th, Chris and I were living in the same house and from our landlord when we moved in, there was an American flag over the door. This was before September 11th. After there was a very huge boom and everyone had a flag over their door but even then it was like the American flag was this very loaded thing. We were talking about it, and to me the American flag is not about the government but is about the people and that's what I love about America. I love the people. I love how different we are from one another. I mean just what a huge and interesting and unique country it is. I remember we were talking about that, about whether or not the flag should to stay and of course that totally changed after



September 11th. The flag became very nationalist and it suggested complicity with what was going on. It turned into a mass mindset rather than celebrating what was interesting about America. Of course it can turn into something else.

I mean it's like any person, the United States is like a person and there are great things and there are bad things. You can do good and bad. Hopefully the United States in the long run will end up doing more good. Obviously we all know we have a long history of bad things that the United States has done. But certainly England, Holland on and on, Germany, whoever. You can just look back and have a long list of a lot of horrible things that so many countries have done. It doesn't matter if you are a Western country, Eastern, if you are Third world, whatever, every country, just like any person does a lot of bad shit. But that's just something you have to work on within your country.

H: It's very easy to get very disenfranchised by your government. Like 'well that's not for me, I'm not part of this anymore'. But we're Americans, that's where we are from. I would rather have America be for me rather than have to give it up to someone who I believe has nothing to do with American ideals which is what I believe are freedom and loving the world.

C: That's fucking true man.

H: To say I love America, is not about being Nationalist or Hawkish. It's about other things.

J: The ideals of America are very interesting and they just exploited really. People can very easily exploit it and just use it in a way to gloss over a lot of the bad stuff that most governments seem to do. It's a fight to make sure the good things get done and the bad stuff aren't as best as you can but unfortunately in our lifetime it's not going to change. We can make things better, many things have improved in the United States over the last 50 years even though other things have gotten worse. I think that is just human nature and we just have to keep fighting.

N: With the elections coming up your asking people to vote. Do you think it's important as well to do things that aren't related to putting hope into governments.

H: Oh sure, direct action yeah.

C: I believe in direct action but I am alarmed by... at least direct action groups in America have this attitude that voting is bad and that it's just this total futile exercise, which I don't agree with that. I think voting is very, very important this year and making the mainstream political climate less toxic for us and the rest of the world is really important and very, very easy for young people to take a hold of. Also too, getting involved with your local government and community, that stuff I think is great but I don't think it should belittle the importance of getting involved in the election this year.

So granted we've been doing voter registration on our tours, just because so many young people in America don't even do that. The lack of involvement in politics is so extreme that just getting them through the door on that issue is important enough to us. On our website we have a thing that says if you are interested in putting an activist table up at one of our shows then get in touch with us. So we encourage people like that and try and do benefit shows in DC every season for local charities and that's always really important too.

N: What do you make about people like Michael Moore.

H: As an artist I don't really respect Michael Moore that much, I mean I don't think he's a great film maker. He makes powerful films that are very effective. With *Fahrenheit 9/11* I think it is an important film right now. Just also, we were talking about this the other day, he's kinda an alternative news source, definitely in America. There is no war footage, there is no pictures of soldiers fighting in Iraq and that is helping wash over a lot of the affects of the war for most American's. For me seeing the film and seeing the mutilated bodies of American soldiers and civilians, I mean I've been following the war, since it began. I've been very interested in it.

N: Didn't you guys when you played with Fugazi in London come out wearing arm bands and gags.

C: Yeah, I've worn arm bands to protest to the war. I think Ian even said at that show 'your government and my government are getting together to plan something.' That was fucked up.

J: Yeah we were there in November and the war began in March. There was a huge build up. The summer of 2002 was like well, we're gonna be invading Iraq sometime next year. It's kinda like there's an element of surprise year, letting them know, we've got nine months.

C: And also so that the war was just so planned. It wasn't like a reaction to something. Yeah, not planned very well.

J: As far as Michael Moore, I have seen all his movies and I do like the fact that he is seen as someone who is very adept at putting a message out. He definitely uses extreme methods. It is propaganda, sometimes it's not always fair but I believe that the message he is putting out there is a good one and that movie definitely is important. Also its firing up the troops. The base who are against the war, who are against Bush. Seeing that movie definitely got me going.

C: It was amazing too coming out of the theatre. It's not like a no culture, it's a numb culture, movies are a huge part of that. I can't think of a more dazed feeling than coming out of a huge blockbuster, the movie euphoria that you just spent two hours in a dark theatre eating popcorn, now you are



just walking out into the night. After that film everyone was charged. Everyone was talking to each other and looking round, and it's just something that doesn't happen after you go see *I Robot*. So on that level, as a pop figure, I think Michael Moore is great. Now you can slam him for fighting fire with fire, using similar tactics to what Fox uses for the right, as a pop figure he is great. To have people arguing outside the movie theatres in DC, it's amazing. People who saw that were tow blocks away from the Saudi Arabian embassy which was in that film. It really struck everyone in this really intense way. I think it was beautiful on this whole cultural level.

N: To go back to something you said earlier about punk rock being empowering, is that something you really want to do with your music.

C: I think so. I guess I should say all music in general is empowering. and a verification of life. You know what I mean. I think the best music, the music that I really care about is the kinda music that makes me feel alive and that life's worth living and getting out there and doing it.

N: Are there any other bands that you are quite influenced by.

C: As far as pop music goes I think hip hop is really, not killing rock and roll but definitely coming the dominant pop music and the most interesting. I would never listen to rock and roll pop radio anymore but there's hip hop radio stations I listen to. So on a pop level I'd say that. As far as bands on the underground go I'm still totally fascinated by our friends El Guapo. I think they are one of the greatest bands in America right now. We're very close to their music and I have an intimate relationship with them. I feel the stuff that they are making is just unstoppable. Its really powerful stuff.

N: I was wonder where you see yourselves fitting in with being part of a hardcore punk label. Is it more say the Kill Rock Stars scene for example or indie scene.

H: I just don't think of Dischord as a hardcore punk label. I think that's how it started but for the last 15 years it's been so varied. I mean I understand where that perception comes from but it just seems they haven't been that way for a long time.

C: I think part of our band is that we take pleasure in not fitting in anywhere. I feel part of the underground and I part of Washington DC but we don't want to be part of a movement, we just want to make music that people care about hopefully and that we care about. There's a joy in that for us.

Interview: Natalie. Original Art: Escarriot. Q & Not U have put out their records on Discord. They're touring the UK again in November. Thanks to Q and Not U for chatting to me, and Chris from Southern for sorting it all out for me!



The Break In don't piss around. They play angry, tough straightedge hardcore and do it really fucking well. They just released a new EP on Dead and Gone records, and are going to be releasing a full length on GSR (from Germany) at the start of 2005, so I thought it was time to interview one of 'em. The interviews with Duggan their vocalist.

RN: So intro...

Duggan: I'm Duggan from the Break In.

RN: How did you come about being vocalist for The Break In, cause it was female fronted to begin with right?

D: Yeah, originally Hannah was our singer. She left, along with the guitarist Alan - who's in On Thin Ice now. And they were just like either split up or get a new singer or guitarist. They'd only had three shows with Hannah singing so they just thought, 'Yeah we can replace them'. I already was friends with them, and they were just like, 'Duggan do you wanna do it?' And I was like 'Alright then!'

RN: The logo's a rip-off from Battle Royale right?

D: What the X and the roses?

RN: No the one with the crest and the 'BR' in the centre.

D: Actually no. We ripped the idea of some patch that we saw in some shitty shop in town. We ripped it off, and that was it really. It does kind of look like the Battle Royale logo, but it looks cool.

RN: So you've just had the new EP come out, how come it took so long, cause it was supposed to come out six months ago right?

D: Yeah originally it was. When I joined the band we did loads of shows and didn't really have time. When we went to practice it was

like, 'Lets practice the set' rather than write songs because it was more important to get tight. So we did that. And then we did a couple of songs that we were going to put on a split with a band called Dead Reckoning, on a Belgian label. Then it was going to turn into a three way split with them and Purification, but that fell through again. So we used those two songs on our 7", to tide everyone over until we did the MCD. We just wanted to get the songs written properly. We got rid of three songs whilst writing it because they sounded really shit, so we just thought that we'd put our hearts into it, and make it a lot better. It was originally meant to come out in April, back when the 7" came out, and that was supposed to come out in November. It was just delays and everything. But it's out now so it's all good!

RN: So was the 7" initially supposed to be all new songs, or was it always going to be demo, and a couple of extra songs?

D: I wanted to get a 7" done because I haven't had the chance to do one before so I was like, 'We've done a demo, we have a chance to do a split 7"', but that fell through so I was like, 'Well we've already written the songs, we may as well put them out on a 7" somehow'. And it wasn't worth just putting two songs on there, so we decided to put the demo on there again. It's not exactly the same as the demo.

RN: Oh, did you re-record it?

D: I re-did some of the vocals, and we took out some of the screeching guitar parts, and the high Slayer parts and that. And we basically put the new songs in between the three songs on our demo so that it was more like an EP, like a really short EP. I just wanted to do a 7" and be a proper hardcore band.

RN: Did it end up on Burial just because you're friends with...

D: Yeah I asked Troy and McKee at Canaan's last show. We were either going to ask them, or another label who I now can't remember the name of. But anyway, we basically asked them and they were like, 'Yeah that's cool. Do it!' But Canaan's last show was like June or July and it didn't come out until April the year later. Delays! It was meant to come out before the end of the year. The dude doing the recording just fucked us around a bit. He was recording... do you know the band Jairus? Yeah he was doing the recording for their album, and he was spending more time doing that than he was on us. So, that was it.

RN: You didn't have as many delays on the MCD then?

D: Not really, no. We were meant to have it a lot before, but because the 7" came out a bit later we got more time to do it. But we recorded it in June and it came out this week, in the last week of September. We were hoping to have it at the end of August but we had pressing plant issues. That was it. We were originally going to have the artwork finished for when we'd actually recorded so it would have been three weeks before it came out. But that fell through because we didn't know what we were going to have for artwork.

RN: Have you had any initial reactions?

D: Well it came out about a week before the first show that we did for it, so a couple of people had pre-ordered it. Kids know the MP3 that we put up from it. The show we played last night in Middlesborough was quite rowdy. I think it will take another few weeks before people start going nuts to the new songs. I'm hoping for good things anyway.



RN: So are you going to start dropping the demo songs from the set? Because you've already dropped one.

D: We've dropped two now. We only play the first song on our demo. We dropped the second song on our demo because it's totally not us. It sounds too much like Throwdown, who we were originally like. We play the last song on our demo now and again but we changed guitarist recently, so we got Richard from Canaan in recently, so Scott from Winter In June is out of the band now. So, yeah we can't play 'Standing Strong' [final song from the demo] at the minute because Richard doesn't know it. But we do bash it out every now and again, like at big shows when there are lots of people there, because we think, 'Oh we need a longer set if we're playing last or whatever'. Everyone goes, 'More, more!'. 'Ok then, we kind of know it, we haven't practiced it in six months!'

RN: It's a crowd pleaser though.

D: Yeah kind of. It sounds cheesy but it is! We play the first song on the demo the whole way through though, because it's called 'The Break In' and it's like our song. It was like the first song that they wrote I think. Actually it might not have been - don't hold me to that! (laughs) We still play the two songs from the 7" all the time, because we have to. We love them anyway.

RN: So any grand plans for the EP?

D: Dude! We got a van the other day, that's it there [points]. We've just been sitting around talking about doing tours. We've got a tour of ten days, eight days in Europe, and then two days in England. It's with Rise And Fall for the first half, and then the second half is with Internal Affairs. GSR sorted us out with some shows. Yeah we're doing our next album on GSR so they're helping us out, and they want us to play out in Europe loads. We're doing another tour in Europe in January as well, like a week, so we're going to try and play there as much before we go off and recording again.

RN: So do you have any idea when the album's gonna be coming out?

D: Yeah, it's all been planned out now. (laughs) They want us to record by the middle of March, with all the artwork finished and given to them. That means probably the

end of February we're going to be recording. We're going to Belgium, probably where Rise And Fall did their record. Then we've got to give them all the artwork and recordings, and they'll get it pressed up ready for May. That's the same time I think that Knuckledust will get their album out too. They want it out so that we can get onto the Eurofests and stuff, all those sort of things, just because it will be cool because we can then spend the summer sitting around in the van, taking time off work, and just drive around. That's our plan. We've started writing for the album as well. We've got about three songs down.

RN: Are you going to go in any other direction?

D: No, it's still gonna be straightedge, it's still heavy as fuck. Well we just got Rich in the band and we've written three songs with him so far, and he's only been in the band just over two months. So we've got to write 12 and pick 10 to record. We might record a couple of old ones but we don't think we will. It's going to be a lot darker. Everyone says that. It's a bit cheesy isn't it?

RN: Everyone says it's going to be a bit heavier as well!

D: Yeah well our early stuff I must admit was a little bit cheesy. Our songs on our demo were really influenced by Throwdown and Bury Your Dead and stuff we listened to then. Now we just want to sound like Ringworm, Integrity and those kind of bands. Be really heavy. There's going to be solos in it, and maybe a little bit of singing. But we're not going Eighteen Visions or anything! At all.

RN: Said very quickly. (laughs)

D: I'm missing them tonight because they're playing just down the road tonight.

RN: So what's the Canterbury scene like at the moment. Are new kids starting bands at the moment, or is it just you guys, November Coming Fire and that kind of thing?

D: Yeah it kind of is. Because when Canaan split up Nate didn't have a band for a little while, and then he joined On Thin Ice, and Alan - who was in Canaan - has joined On Thin Ice now, so they're doing that. And then the other guys who were doing Canaan are either in our band or in NCF. There's loads of new kids. There's Innocent Blood. They've

been playing out. They've got a new singer, and their demo's out now. You see people around with their T-Shirts today. They're like the new big band. They sound like Madball and they're just tough! There's this new band called Hate Mail as well, who are around the CT area. They're like Horrorshow sort of thing. There are a couple of bands coming out, but they haven't made it out of the practice room yet. But the shows in Canterbury have been really good recently, they've been really packed out at the moment. We've got the venue - The Jubilee Hall - back again. We couldn't use it for like two years. We started using different community or school halls, but we could only use them one time and then people would ring the cops, and we wouldn't be able to use it again, so we slowly ran out of places. Now we've got the Jubilee Hall back we can do shows all the time now.

RN: How come you lost the Jubilee Hall?

D: They resurfaced the floor. OK so, when we book the venue we don't tell them that we're putting on a hardcore show there. If they found that out they'd fucking flip. But we just say that it's a private party where a band plays, and when they think of a private party they think; girls in high-heels, cigarettes on the floor and stuff. We don't let anyone smoke because it's a community hall, and that'd fuck it up. And people don't usually come to our shows in high-heels so that's alright. They'd resurfaced the floor and we couldn't use it. That was back when Count Me Out toured the UK and we wanted to use that venue. We ended up using some tiny ass little hall next to someone's house where we got shut down! We tried to get a venue for Mental and we phoned them up just on the off chance that they just might let us use it. And they were like, 'Yeah alright we tore up the floor so you can use it again'. So shows are back on again. CT's back on the rise.

Interview: Edd Photos: Jack McDonald (jack.mcdonald@kcl.ac.uk). The Break In just put out a CDEP on Dead & Gone Records. Before that they put out a 7" on Burial.



A NEW NAME OR A NEW FESTIVAL

WASTED FEST:

BY CHRIS LEVER

I went to Morecambe this summer... wait for it... for the first time in my life. Ok, this may not appear to be too big a confession amongst all you other twenty-something's out there, but ask any older punkers and it's a downright travesty. Then again, that's neat coming from someone old enough to have seen Discharge the first time round. What about little old me... sure I've read about them, but I've never had the chance to see them first hand and I wanted my own slice of the action. I wanted to see Ipswich heroes the Adicts play their only UK gig that year; I wanted to see if the Subhumans are still half as great as Craig O'Hara's 'The Philosophy of Punk' made them out to be, and most of all, I wanted to see MDC for my first time around. However, the times they are a changin' kids; this isn't Holiday in the Sun anymore, this is Wasted – 'The new global punk festival for the global punk family.' Jennie and Darren, the festival promoters added themselves "you'll notice a few differences in Wasted" and by booking a plethora of younger and more eclectic acts from Captain Everything, The Parkinsons and No Comply to The Flying Marrows, Freaks Union, Howards Alias and Dan Potthast you certainly can't blame them for trying. However, as I watched all these brilliant performances with what could be best described as an 'intimate' crowd I couldn't help but notice that Morecambe might just be a little reluctant to change the habit of a lifetime? If anyone else was fortunate enough to see Matt Reynold's beautifully humble solo performance on the acoustic stage you'd probably agree with me in stating that if it looks like Holidays in the Sun, sounds like Holidays in the Sun and heckles like Holidays in the Sun there's only one thing it could be, but don't take my word for it, let's see what the bands and the fans had to say for themselves.

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"It's good; I think this year more than others they've tried to mix in new and old, especially with having Matt from Howards Alias on the acoustic stage. It's seen as a bit of an old skool punk thing but everyone here's cool; most people are up for listening to anything, even though there is a lot of old skool, classic, mo-hawk punk.

Everyone's into it; they're going the right way about it by mixing in loads of new bands"
Jon [Captain Everything]

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Q: What's your name mate?

A: Simon... Simon

Q: And how many times have you been to this festival?

A: Three times.

Q: What do you think of it so far? Who have you been to see?

A: Well I've been looking for the woman... you know? That woman who like... spread her legs... that woman with the really wide legs! That's the one I'm looking for here!

Q: Err... and have you managed to stay sober throughout any of the weekend?

A: No! I'm fucking down here with the guys, you know? My guys... you haven't fucking met my crew... you'll meet my crew.

Q: Ok, can I ask you one more question... what do you think of Morecambe trying to change itself to bring newer audiences in?

A: What it is... I'm trying to fucking think... No Boundaries! One world! One world! I get so angry with some of the people here! We need one world!

Simon [the random drunk guy]

xxx

"We played last year, and even though it's got a different name and everything it feels pretty much the same as last year but it's wicked that they mix up so many different types of bands like the bands that have been around for 20 or 30 years and the bands that have been around a few years, it's a nice collaboration, especially with the acoustic stage as well... I went to see Hazel O'Connor!"

Kelly [No Comply]

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Q: So what do you think about the festival, you haven't played it before have you?

A: Nah, I've never even been here before.

Q: What do you make of it; do you think they're making more of an effort to break away from the stereotype?

A: I think they are. They've mingled in the 'reunion' kind of bands that don't really interest me personally with a lot of the Household Name bands. I think it's kinda split somewhere down the middle from the die-hard old skoolers who are here to see the Upstarts and the reunion bands, and I can't speak for everyone, but they're probably a little less open-minded about the younger bands, but at the same time there's going to be kids here who are - like me - not really interested in the other bands. It's all working out though, there seems to be a real good feeling of unity here.

Gregg [Freaks Union]

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Q: How's the festival been for you... do you really think it's a new name and a new festival?

A: I don't really know because I've never been before, so I don't really know what it was like before. I'm quite surprised because - maybe I was being a bit narrow-minded - but I kind of expected to get shit because I've got long hair and I'm not that 'punk' or whatever, so I wasn't expecting people to be so open-minded, but everyone that I've talked to over the weekend and stuff has been fucking cool. I think it's been dead cool... there're obviously a few pricks, but there's always a few pricks everywhere.

Matt [Howards Alias]

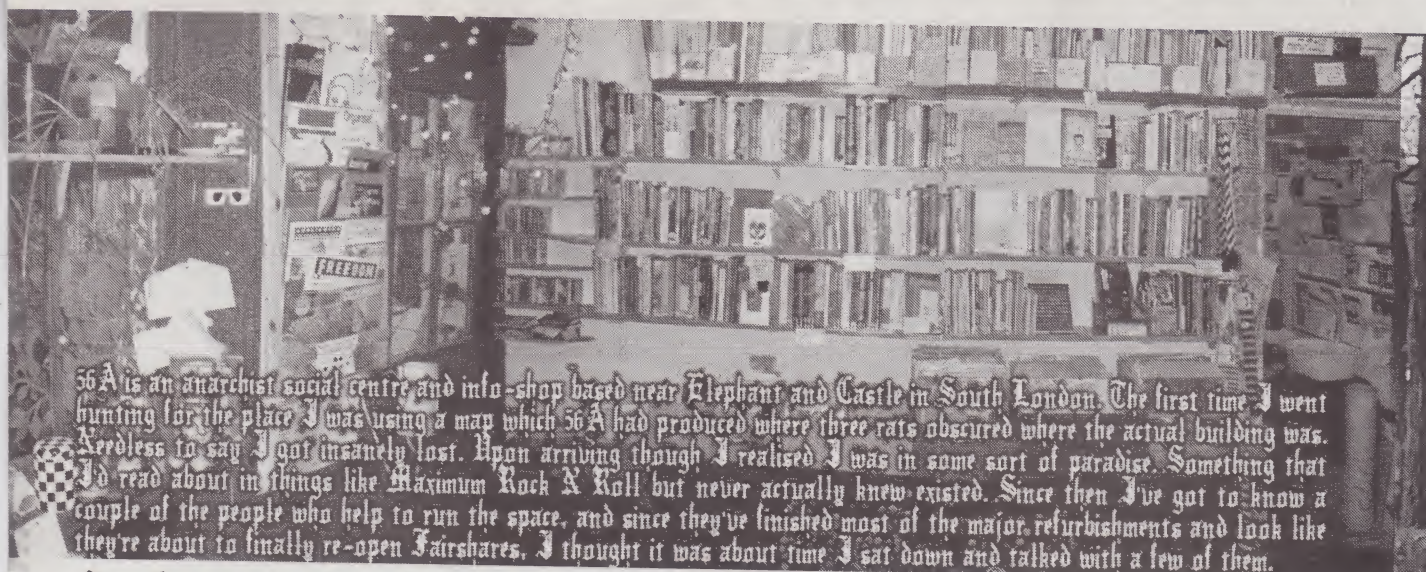
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Cheers to Jennie and Darren for taking on the arduous task of trying to make the younger crowd more accepted at Morecambe, it won't happen in leaps and bounds, but things appear to be getting better!

Check out <http://www.punkfestival.co.uk> for details of other forthcoming Wasted events.

Words by Chris Lever and Richard Podd

Thanks to everyone I harassed for taking time out of their holiday in the sun for the brief chat.



56A is an anarchist social centre and info-shop based near Elephant and Castle in South London. The first time I went hunting for the place I was using a map which 56A had produced where three rats obscured where the actual building was. Needless to say I got insanely lost. Upon arriving though I realized I was in some sort of paradise. Something that I'd read about in things like Maximum Rock & Roll but never actually knew existed. Since then I've got to know a couple of the people who help to run the space, and since they've finished most of the major refurbishments and look like they're about to finally re-open Fairshares, I thought it was about time I sat down and talked with a few of them.

Jon Active

RN: Ok, so how did you get involved at working at 56A?

Jon @ctive: I was already involved in a way because they'd been buying stuff for the info-shop from Active since the day it opened - which is a long time ago. In the meantime I was more involved, in terms of helping out and supplying, the 121 [an old squatted social centre in Brixton] bookshop. That got closed down a couple of years ago now, and since then there's been not much of an outlet for the Active catalogue other than people doing gig stalls and via mailorder. People from 56A used to come and get stuff from me but they were getting less and less good at doing that so I thought, 'fuck it'. Then Paco from 'La Vida En Mus' said, 'Oh maybe we can help out at 56A', and I said, 'Yeah I've been thinking about that'. We then supposedly teamed up and opened up 56A on a Saturday and increased the stock so that it now has most of what Active has.

RN: So you just do the Saturday shift then?

Jon: Yeah, there's a bit more than just doing the 'Saturday shift' with 56A the way it is at the moment. At the moment we're still 'reopening' as it were since getting closed down and losing our squatting status, and becoming legitimate, we've had to satisfy the health and safety sort of shit, and we're still doing that. So the food co-op, which is an essential part of 56A, which we're sitting in, isn't technically open yet, because it's not health and safety friendly. But it will be soon, so I've been doing building work and DIY. I.e. bricks, and mortar, and paint and shelves and that sort of stuff. And also the real fun stuff of doing the paper work and answering forms, for the council. Opening up bank accounts. Really boring rubbish. The teaming up with Paco means I do Saturday shifts at 56A and he's left the country!

RN: Have you had any complaints about going "legitimate"?

Jon: Any criticisms? No-one's actually come up to me and said, 'You've sold out!' about it. There's always people who say, 'Oh it's a shame when you're not squatting', and all of us would much prefer if it was a squatted

centre and whatever, but the reality of London, and squatting life, is that we don't keep places for any length of time, unless there's something very weird about it. We don't have a scene which is capable of supporting things and fighting against evictions and all the people involved with 56A thought that it would be better for it to stay as a legitimate base, even if we are paying rent - and we're paying a very cheap rent - than to lose it and for there to be nothing.

RN: What's the point of doing the info-shop then?

Jon: Well the original point of doing it - which you'll have to talk to Chris about because he was originally involved in setting it up - but the original notion as far as I'm concerned is that 56A is a point of reference for people to come to. 56A is fairly well known and it will be more and more known. So it's a place, which anyone who's travelling from outside London can come to and find out about what's happening in London. It's for people inside London to come to and find out about what's happening in London too, be it about empty squats or gigs or demos or other activist groups. The food co-op obviously is about buying cheap organic wholefoods. The bike space is about people coming and being able to use tools to fix their bikes, and maybe being given help and advice on how to fix them. The archive, which is a huge archive of anarchist information, zines, magazines, all kinds of stuff from all over the world. People can come and use it for research and to just have a look at. Then the info-shop in terms of being a shop is a place where you can buy literature and music and tapes and anything kind of anarchist, cheap.

RN: So is it all of you guys doing the food co-op?

Jon: In theory they're separate. There's a separate co-op group within the place who run the food co-op. It's not really very strong at the moment, which is part of the problem. There's a kind of crossover between the bookshop and what is Fairshares [the food co-op] at the moment, and we'll have to see how it develops. We need volunteers for it. The whole place is volunteer run - obviously. The whole place is voluntary run, and no-one profits off of it personally, except perhaps for their egos!

RN: Do you guys find you have enough volunteers?

Jon: Yes and no. On the whole no. If we had more people then it wouldn't just be the small group of us who have been doing everything. But it's difficult for people to get involved, and it's difficult for people to get involved as much as those who have been here for years are. Just because of the nature of the way things have been. You have to get used to the idea of having more regular meetings so that people can find out about stuff. But then people don't like going to meetings. There are people here who come and do their shifts every now and again but don't ever go to meetings. In a way that's fair enough. But I want to this place to be open all week; Tuesday to Saturday. At the moment it's just Thursday, Friday, Saturday. People want to expand, so at some point we're going to need more people to be able to do that. And when the food co-op does open we'll need - in theory - three people here all the time. One person to the bike space, one person in the infoshop and one person in the food co-op.

RN: So is the food co-op going to be open everyday then?

Jon: At the moment the food co-op will only be open when the info-shop is open, which at the moment is Thursday, Friday, and Saturday. That's the plan at least.

RN: Are there any other food co-ops in the area?

Jon: Not that I'm aware of no. There's a fairly well known health food shop that won't be very happy when we re-open. (laughs) But food co-ops still exist in quite a lot of places and I think there is a bit of a come back for them just with the general increase in the health food industry. But they're something that was much bigger some time ago, and they've kind of died out a bit. But it's been great, whilst we've been re-building and getting this place together, we've had so many people - so many different types of people - coming past saying, 'Oh when's the food co-op going to open? It's great that we can buy our rice or beans or whatever it is because it's so cheap. I can't afford to buy those things - organically - normally'. So yeah.



56A info shop

56A Crampton Street, London, SE17

RN: So has the collective had any burnout or anything like that?

Jon: If I had burnout I wouldn't be talking to you now! (laughs) Yeah we experience a lot of burnout because we see a lot of people come and go. You've just got to be realistic about what it is that you're doing, you know? As far as I'm concerned you can't expect major fucking changes or the revolution to break out because of what you're doing but if you do things that you consider to be worthwhile, and that other people appreciate and consider worthwhile then yeah, it's not so difficult to stick at something - however tiresome.

Chris

RN: Well, why did you set this place up?

Chris: I'd been going to 121 squat centre in Brixton in the Eighties, and then I moved up to Southwark where there were lots of similar squatters involved with similar anarchist ideas, and I knew the people who ran Fairshares, so we just came along to 51 [Crampton Street], thinking I was going to put an information rack in. Then saw they had an empty room, and decided to turn it into a bookshop. So the point was just to set up another social space and anarchist book shop in South London.

RN: So when you set it up was there lots of other stuff happening?

Chris: Yeah, there was loads of other stuff happening. There was much more of a squatting scene and we came in on the back of that. The people that set this place up - for lack of better description - were class struggle anarchists and we just decided to set it up.

RN: Was it just a bookshop to begin with or did it always have the music side?

Chris: The music came pretty soon, a couple of years in. Initially it was quite a small bookshop but then it's mutated a lot since '91 [when the place was set up]. It's moving around all the time and five years in the archive came along. Initially it was just books and t-shirts. But yeah the records came here from year two, they were a bit up or down really for a while, but its now consistent because Active's been doing it. People

always suggest things, and we just let the project bloom. Like the bike shop, or the seed exchange, someone comes along with an idea, and we've got the space and energy to do it. Its about that, its not about us owning the space or about selling books and stuff, its about what we can bring to the shop, imagine and then do. It's always a battle because it's quite a small space. But its full of possibilities, hence then our total re-jigging of last year, where we've been looking towards the future, and now we've got more space so we've made one of the rooms a library room. And we're maybe going to be having cafes, and maybe movie nights here as well. That'd be in collaboration with the food co-op at the front.

RN: So was Fairshares here first then?

Chris: Yeah, Fairshares was squatted by local people in 1988, there was a collective called the Rabbit Food Collective, who'd been evicted from the Old Vic Road and they came here and opened up the shop. And then in '91 we came along.

RN: It's been squatted then for...

Chris: Squatted from '88 - 2004.

RN: Doesn't that mean you could claim...

Chris: No! Technically we could have gone for reverse possession but then when we got paperwork for a connected building we found out that they had a lot of paper work and that we would have lost the place, because there had been contact with the owners during the 12 years. We'd acknowledged, or at least *someone*, had acknowledged them as landowners.

RN: So you're renting now?

Chris: Yeah on the basis of the food co-op being at the front of the building we were offered a cheap rent by the council. They were initially discussing eviction but they offered the food co-op - and us as well - a cheap rent, which is just £40 a week. We decided that we had the archive and that it would be a pain in the arse to move it all the time, so we decided to bite the bullet and become renters. We're just in the process of seeing what legitimacy is all about really, which is seeing what you can get away with to be honest.

RN: How's it going?

Chris: Well it hasn't really impinged on us as yet. In terms of making trouble, well its different when you're making trouble in a squat than when you have a lease to worry about. But that's the game isn't it! But that's what we're working out now. We're still in the process of building. But yeah it's still just a game of seeing how much you can get away with.

RN: So I'm assuming you haven't had to make any compromises so far except for paying rent?

Chris: Yeah, we haven't had any compromises so far. There's not much to be said about it. We're just going to have to see how it goes. We're not really worried about it.

RN: Do you have much interaction with the local community?

Chris: Yeah because the shop's on an estate and I live on the estate myself... There's a continuity of what was going on, on the estate in the late eighties because there were lots of squats. There was a squatted café, and then there was Fairshares, and then us. So yeah we have a connection to the estate where we live and just a bit in the local area. We're thinking of doing more stuff - more community focused stuff - based around stuff like a free box or a book exchange. Plus we have the bike workshop, which lots of local people use.

RN: Do you have anything specifically within the co-op that you do?

Chris: Yeah my main focus is I work on the archive, which is something that we've been waiting to start to push, and has now been re-built, and has its own extra room. Its two things, it's a space where people can come and read from our vast archive - we've probably got about 10,000 things archived on hundreds of different things - and the second thing is that people can actually start to use it to research to write other things. We have a lot of diverse and incredible leaflets from the movement which not many other people have kept. So that's been quite useful for people who've been writing leaflets or texts. It should be a resource for the anti-capitalist movement to be able to look back and see what's happened, seeing as people

forget what happened every ten years or so. So yeah that's something that we're going to start to really push.

Caroline

RN: How did you get involved in 56a?

Caz: I used to be involved in different squatted centres in Brixton. There was one on Coldharbour Lane, the old dole office down there, which we had for four or five years. Loads of major things happened there, but I think that would make a whole other tape! (laughs) After that got evicted in 1995, I got more involved in the 121 Centre, then that got evicted in 1999. By then I'd spent a bit more time here and a lot of the stuff that was happening in 121 came up here, leftover books from the shop there, a lot of the archive stuff from there, and a lot of the people as well.

RN: So what do you do here then?

Caz: Well we do all sorts of things here! Over the last year we've spent a lot of time doing a lot of building work. One of the reasons that I like this place and wanted to get involved here is because it's not just a bookshop. It's not just an anarchist info-shop. I don't know whether you've seen out the front - the food co-op. When that was previously open a lot of people would come to buy their food from there, and from stopping in to buy some bread or organic rice or whatever, they'd discover all this information out the back. And the same thing with the bit that's now just out at the side here - the bike room. We used to have a big bike workshop, and a lot of people would come just to fix up their bikes, or to get second hand parts. I liked the fact that all those things are combined into one space. I feel quite involved in the bike stuff that happens here, and I've also been involved in the Fairshares [food co-op].

RN: How close are you to finishing off the Fairshares bit, and bike space?

Caz: Well the bike thing is up and running, just in a much smaller way than it was before. We don't have the space to keep lots of frames here. We don't have the space to be able to have people to come and make bikes for free from here, which we used to do. What we do have space for is small parts. We have quite a healthy selection of wheels, and tires, and seat posts and all that sort of things...

RN: Bottom brackets?

Caz: Yup we have some bottom brackets! We're also trying to get some more tools and things like grease, and WD40 etc. Some spare parts we actually buy in as well, and we run completely on donations in the bike room. And that's there every Thursday and Friday at the moment.

RN: Cool. Are those posters covering holes in the plaster, or are they just decoration?

Caz: No, we put the posters up last week cause last week was ESF [European Social Forum] and we thought, 'OK we're going to be open Thursday, Friday, Saturday anyways - because that's our normal opening hours - so why don't we do free food whilst ESF is on?' So it was to encourage people to come visit whilst they were in town. So most of kitchen - as you can see - is now finished. That wall's been plastered and painted. I know it doesn't look perfect but it's much better than it looked before. The back wall's not quite finished so we put the posters up to hide some blemishes. And this relic, the banner that says 'Food Not Bombs' was made when we used to Food Not Bombs in South London regularly...

RN: How long ago was that?

Caz: Quite a few years now! And every so often people come along and want to get it running again, and the banner's available for that sort of use, and there's also some big pots and cutlery and plates and things like that. So if anybody wants to do Food Not Bombs they can come down and talk to us about it!

RN: How did ESF go? Did many people come down - even though it was on the other side of the city?

Caz: Even though it was on the other side of the city and it was only advertised in about half of the publications we did have more visitors than usual. Loads of people appreciated the food, and we actually had quite a few visitors from the 'official ESF', who hadn't really had a chance to find out about the autonomous stuff until they came here. So that was really good, and we sent them off to Middlesex [where Beyond ESF was happening].

RN: That's cool. So what purpose does this space serve?

Caz: Well beyond the bits that we've already talked about, like people being able to come in and fix their bikes, and find spare bike parts, and generally make the bike safer to use (laughs). When the food shop's open again people are going to be able to come here and buy wholefoods at normal prices not the inflated prices that you often find in wholefood shops. And the information spaces gets all sorts of visitors. We get people visiting London. We get people who've moved to London who are looking for somewhere to start squatting. We get people that want to look up a particular type of anarchy or situationist theory, or historical fact in the archive. We get people who come in just to find out about what's going on, and any political campaigns or protests that people might want to get involved with. So for all of those reasons it's a really good place for people to come and find out about stuff for the first time, and hopefully leave and get more involved in other things.

RN: Does 56a as a collective do anything other than this space? Do you print pamphlets, zines, do any of that sort of things? You did the cookbook but was that a one off?

Caz: In the past we've done a lot of things. Traditionally we've re-printed things that we've particularly liked, and re-printed them as pamphlets so that they're cheaper, and that's something that Jon [Active] already does through Active Distribution as well. We've got plans to do a few more things like that, and between the people in the collective there are people who already publish other things. We've got, for example, 'Past Tense Publishing' which is old historical stuff, and people from the 'Radical History Group' feeding into that. We've got 'Eroding Empire', which was started - and is still run - by two people from here, which is a regular events listing. Then Active Distribution do a lot of other bits and pieces - sometimes linked with here - and there's a few other things that we've got planned! (laughs)

RN: So how's it going now that you're fully council sanctioned and no longer squatting?

Caz: It's a bit weird because we've had two years now to get used to the idea of deciding to pay cheap rent rather than being evicted, and having a lot of time to think about what that's going mean and how it's going to effect us. I'm hoping it's not going to effect us that much. We've done a lot of fundraising since



Spices n sauces in Fairshares

then, and we haven't actually had to start paying rent yet because they gave us a rent free period to start off with. And it looks like that's going to be extended. In exchange for doing building work they're going to give us an extra month of not paying rent, which is great. And I think that because the rent is the cheap rate that it is, and the food shop is going to be paying the majority of the rent that the info-shop should be able to survive without putting our prices up or scramble around looking for money from other places. It'll be kind of interesting to see if we can last because we have a lease for ten years! I'm quite excited about it because it's the first time - or at least the first time that I know of - that a building in either Lambeth or Southwark has gone from being squatted to having a lease. Normally the council's position up till now has been to not give anyone any legal status and if you wanted to squat a place you're not allowed to buy it, or to lease it, or to do anything else with it, and eventually you'll get evicted, and that's it.

RN: How did you convince the council to let you have the place then?

Caz: We didn't actually have to do much convincing because I think they understood that because we'd been here for so long, and because we're not just an anarchist social centre, we're not just an info-shop. We've actually got this quite respected community led, grass-roots food co-op attached to us. So if they just evicted us without giving the food co-op a chance to stay here then a lot of people would be really upset.

RN: So have you had much criticism from 'holier than thou' anarchists? There's the pamphlet about not being able to rent yourselves out of social...

Caz: Yeah the not being able to rent yourself out of a social relationship [It's a pamphlet put together by some members of Leeds EFL]. We've read the pamphlet. Some people have responded to the pamphlet. I don't think we're ever going to lose touch with our squatting roots, as such, not just because we have a squatting archive here, we have an empties list here, and people are setting up a tool exchange out back. And the idea with that is that we're looking for tools - donations of things like crowbars and useful tools - for squatters and other people can use to fix their houses up, and we're going to have them available on a deposit scheme. Most of the people involved with the collective - as far as I know - are living in squats right now. Which is probably different to the people that wrote that pamphlet! So, I don't think that we feel there's a big problem there. And for us in South London to know that there's one space that isn't going to get evicted, which compliments all the other squatted spaces that happen for two or three months at a time, and all our individual houses that happen for six months at a time is really good.

RN: Are you going to be doing any squatting workshops and things? Like teaching how to do 'leccy and things like that?



Some dinosaurs chatting

Caz: Well in the last two years we've done a lot of work here. We've actually re-plumbed and re-wired the whole building and have offered the opportunity to help to everyone, though very few people took us up on our offer - unfortunately which is why it's taken so long! (laughs) We've done that sort of thing. We've also done urban climbing - how to get up and down walls and into windows sort of workshops. In the past we've had things like free school here. Did the others tell you about that?

RN: Nope they didn't mention it.

Caz: Oh, they haven't told you anything! Ok... This is something that happened two years ago, and it was something we'd planned to happen this past summer, but because of the building work taking so long we put it off. But it's something we definitely want to do next year. Last time what we did was advertise the fact that we were going to run a free school for one month, and we asked everyone we knew to offer any skills, anything that they could offer, any language they could teach, skill they had etc. And then we asked everyone what they wanted to learn and put the whole thing together. We actually rented the tenants space down the road so that we had some extra space as well as here, and made arrangements with various squats around South London to use certain rooms for certain things, like a dark room or whatever. And then we just publicised where and when the workshops were going to be. And a lot of people did come along, and a lot of things happened that month, and a lot of the things carried on, and it's something we definitely want to repeat. It was a really DIY thing, and it was completely free to take part in any of it, and we subsidised it from money from the infoshop so that people at the workshops could buy materials and things they needed without the person putting it on going out of pocket.

RN: Does the infoshop itself manage to survive financially?

Caz: I think the infoshop at the moment is doing OK. One of the thing that we're doing at the moment - that we've been doing for the last few years - is selling a few extra

things that we never used to sell, like stripy socks. And we sell the stripy socks for £2 each...

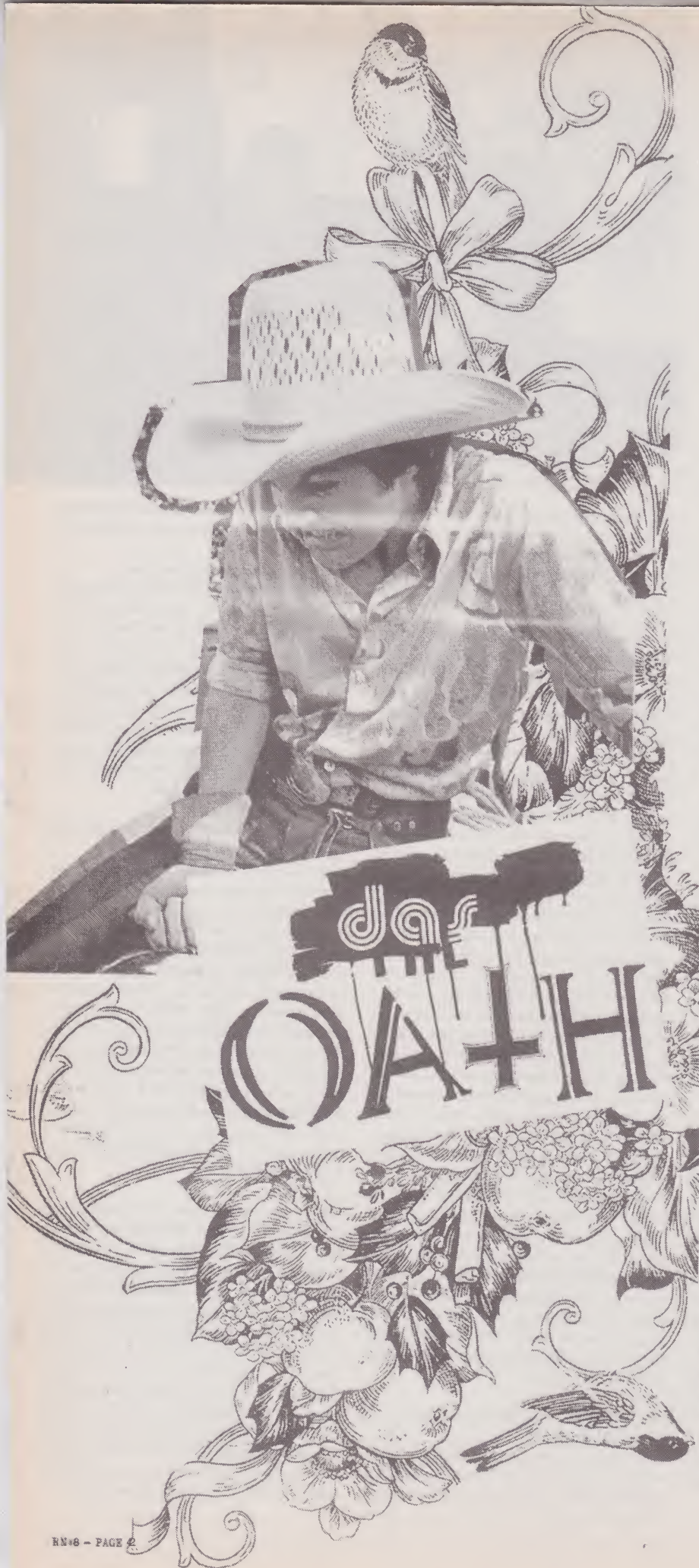
RN: And you've got the chocolate.

Caz: Yup we now sell chocolate as well. We figure that people can come here and buy luxury products like that, and they're not books and they're not information, and people buy them anyway, and if they buy them here they're cheaper than anywhere else and we get to make a bit of money. So yeah we're trying to make money that way rather than putting the prices of the books or magazines up. We're trying to keep them at as low a price as possible.

RN: I think I've covered everything. Is there anything else you wanna add?

Caz: I'm trying to think. The main projects that have happened here and may happen again include: In the past we had a seed swap here and the idea was that people would come here and pick up free seeds and go off and garden with them. We'll probably do that again next spring. There's also the zine library as well. Which is all zines, personal, self-published stuff from around the world. And at the moment we're on a bit of a drive to go and pro-actively collect more zines, and expand that. So if anyone out there makes a zine and wants to send us a copy of their zine for us to put in the library then people can come read them and enjoy it, and it'll be great.

Interviews: Edd, Photos (and panorama): Jon @ctive. The 56A infoshop is located at 56A Crampton Street, London, SE17. The easiest way to get there is to go to Elephant and Castle tube station and then head down the road taking you towards Camberwell and Burgess Park (Walworth Road). Take your first right off the road. Your second left, walk for about 50m, and you should hopefully be looking at the infoshop (and to think I got lost the first time I visited!). If you're connected to the net you might want to email cramptonstreet@yahoo.co.uk and ask them how to get there. For the record interviews were re-printed in chronological order.



I'm still not sure how Das Oath manages to operate as a band. I mean half of them live in the States, the other half in Holland. Somehow though they still manage to produce amazing music, and regularly tour. I recently had the chance to sit down with the band's guitarist Jeroen about his band. I also wanted to talk to him about the record label - Coalition that he helps to run, a label that intrigues me almost as much as Das Oath. The beginning of our conversation was unfortunately cut off because of another person who helps write for Rancid News thinking that the tape he was recording his interview on was blank. I managed to get the tape back off him just as he recorded over me asking about how they work as a band.

J: ... two of us live in New York, two of us live in the Netherlands so... And everybody also has their own things going on. I run a record label, the other guys run a record label and they also work. Our drummer has another band called Oil, so everyone is really busy so it's not like we can practice on a weekly base because there's like 3,000 miles between each other (laughs). So for us whenever we get together we have to tour, we have to write, we have to rehearse and we have to record in time frames which are absolutely absurd! This record was written, rehearsed and recorded in the time frame of five weeks and in that time we played 17 shows, so it was fucking crazy. We were all in the Netherlands, and the only focus that we had for five or six weeks was this band, and songs, writing songs. During the week we'd rehearse all afternoon for five hours straight and then Thursday, Friday, Saturday, Sunday we'd go out and play shows so we could finance the whole operation of doing the record. So it's a crazy time pressure on anything it is that we want to do. But I guess it's part of what we do. I think if perhaps that pressure wasn't there then this band would be different. Who knows!

RN: I was going to ask whether you thought the band sound comes from the pressure you put on yourselves?

J: I don't know. I mean there's different things. We listen to a lot of really different things. Our drummer only listens to dub music, and our singer only listens to black metal. I listen to lots of different things, but I'm a sucker for all that post-punk sort of stuff. Then Aaron is also someone who likes all sorts of stuff. And then we have this common bond that we all grew up on hardcore stuff. But all these different backgrounds bring in different influences that maybe create some kind of chemistry together with the pressure of living so far

away from each other. Yeah, it's a weird thing.

RN: So OK to ask a question I'm sure you get a lot, how did the band come together in the first place?

J: Oh. Well, we were already friends. I was already friends with Mark and Nate for quite a while and in September '99, they came over to Holland. When they came over we were talking and we were saying, 'Oh yeah man it'd be cool to jam out together, that'd be so awesome'. Then I'd known already Marcel - the drummer - for a really long time. Strangely enough he called me up saying, 'Oh my usual band isn't rehearsing tonight, would you like to jam out?' And I was like, 'Wow, dude that's cool cause I have two friends here and we were just talking about doing that'. So we got together and wrote eight songs on the spot in the first rehearsal, went to the studio, recorded those songs and put them out on a 7". Then the next year, just six weeks after the 7" had come out, we went on a six week tour through Europe. Nobody knew us!

RN: I'm not sure it is, but I've always assumed that the name had something to do with straightedge?

J: (laughs) Yeah, maybe for one practice. But no we never intended anything like that. We were just looking for a name and I guess that it just sounded pretty cool. So that's the only reason we took it. And on our first tour we were playing in Germany, and I heard these two kids talking about 'Das Oath' rather than 'The Oath', and I thought that it sounded really funny, so we kind of adopted the whole thing.

RN: I think it's maybe because you guys don't play very much, but you guys seem to have a pretty confrontational style when you play.

J: I guess we try to get a response from the audience. We feed off a reaction from the audience, no matter whether it's positive or negative, we don't really care if people are into us, but the worst thing that can happen is that people don't fucking react or care, or do anything. If people fucking hate us for all the fucking noise that we make then that's cool. And if people like us then that's awesome. But it's not like we're up there to please people by going off. It's just what we're into. I can only really speak for myself though. I'm sure that Mark probably has a completely different vision of the whole thing. He likes to provoke and get a reaction out of people.

RN: It's Mark that does all the artwork right?

J: Mark does a lot of the concepts, but Marco who co-runs Coalition Records, has

done a lot of the artwork. He and Mark have done all the visual things together.

RN: Yeah you guys caused a bit of a controversy with the artwork in the 10", and then the new CD booklet is all white pages.

J: Yeah exactly. I mean there was a purpose. People thought that we were just going to do more porn and more transgender porno or whatever, and that was not really the issue, or the point, that we were trying to make. It was not like we were trying to make a controversial record sleeve. It was just what we thought would be a good idea. But now the whole concept has completely changed. People don't seem to be able to be able to deal with the minimalist stuff either. So probably a lot of people don't like that either.

RN: Do you guys find that you're misinterpreted a lot?

J: I mean we don't really have any message. It's not that we're out there to push our opinions onto anyone. Like we don't have any advice to give to any person. So it's fine if people misunderstand us because I think that in the first place I don't think that we have a specific message. Of course we all have our own ideas and that translates into music and into lyrics, but it's not that the lyrics are written to be read in a certain way. If somebody reads the lyrics and comes up to us, or comes up to Mark and says, 'Hey, I think this lyric is about this, and this', he'd probably say, 'Yeah that's exactly what it's about'. You know, you can get anything out of it. Some people might like it, some people might hate it.

RN: Coalition records seems to release everything, you've got post-punk, pop-punk, really thrashy hardcore and everything in the middle. Was that intentional? Do you just release whatever you enjoy?

J: In my opinion a label should reflect the label persons musical taste and I mean we got really well known. I guess we got known for the really fast hardcore stuff, and the way that our records look, the packaging.

RN: Yeah they seem to all share a certain style.

J: But it got to a point where we were like, 'OK, are we going to just repeat ourselves and just put out the exact same titles of music', whereas we actually like other kinds of music, so we thought that if we like something then we should just put it out, no matter if it meets the expectations of someone that buys it. A lot of people just expect us to be really fast brutal hardcore, and some of our releases are, but some of them are not. Like Feverdream is strongly influenced by stuff like Blonde Redhead and Shellac, and they're awesome. They have

a really great thing going on, and to me they're as fucking punk as a band that plays blasting hardcore. The energy, and the expression and the mindset is all the same, and for me that's the most important part.

RN: Do you have problems getting rid of records that aren't just fast, thrashy hardcore?

J: No, not really. It's a lot safer to just put out hardcore. Just because people know what they want, and they know what they expect, so to put out a band like Feverdream is pretty much a gamble. People really don't like to try new things out. They always stay in their own little safe settings of what they like and what they appreciate. So a band like Feverdream doesn't interest those people at all, and since we're not a well known label in the post-punk, or the post-rock scene, it's a lot harder for you to get those records out, to the people that might like it. But that's not the issue. For me the issue is more the music, the art, the expression, the energy, all of that together. And I think that's what's most important to



Some people never go crazy... What truly miserable lives they must lead

me. I don't care if hardcore kids don't like it. That's fine. Everybody should listen to what they're into.

RN: Do you consider the records that you put out on Coalition in the same way as you do about your own bands records? Do you feel the same kind of connection and attachment?

J: Yeah of course. I think a label is like the little baby that me and Marcel created and it's started to grow and everything, and it grows with the bands that we put out. And there's no way that I would put out a band if I'm not into it, or if I don't like the people, or don't like the music there's no way that we're going to put it out. I don't see any point putting out records that I don't like just because it fits a trend or whatever! I'm not interested in that. I'm interested in good honest music, and people that really believe in what they're doing.

RN: Was that one of the original reasons for setting the label up? Was that one of the goals to support those kind of bands?

J: No, there was no goal. There wasn't even an idea to start a label. Me and Marcel met ten years ago, and we were at this political meeting, and talking about music, and it happened that Marcel wanted to put out the

7" of Larum, this old Dutch hardcore band, and I was like, 'That's one of my favourite bands ever, lets put it out together!' And from there we just kept on putting out records together. It was like, 'Lets put out a 7"' and then we put out another record, and another record, and all of a sudden it became more like there was actually a label, which in the beginning wasn't something that we were really thinking about. It wasn't like we sat down and thought, 'OK, lets put together a record label and make a bunch of money' or put out 70 records or anything like that!

RN: Is there a supportive scene over in Holland?

J: I guess, yeah. But everyone seems to be doing their own thing, so I don't have the feeling that there's a strong following in the Netherlands for our label because we do so many different things. I think it would have probably have been different if we'd just kept doing hardcore. Then we'd have had a following. But because we've released Feverdream or Oil or Je Ne Sais Quo, or sevenfeetfour; those bands are musically very different from Seein Red, or Tear It Up or The Rites or any of those bands. So I suppose there's all sorts of different people

that like our records, but not liking everything.

RN: I think I'm out of questions. Oh actually no wait just to make it a difficult ending, if you could release one bands' record, who would it be?

J: Oh, that's a tough one!

RN: Actually you can have three.

J: Three? Recent bands or any bands?

RN: Yeah any, except for Black Flag cause everyone says them.

J: I don't know man, there are so many. I could probably come up with 20 names easily going from like you know rock music to artcore, that I consider to be total classics that I would have loved to put out. Be it Led Zeppelin, or Black Flag or Youth Of Today or lets see, Fugazi. [Pause] There's a load of really awesome stuff. I don't know. I've never thought of that before.

Interview: Edd. Das Oath just released a full length on Dim Mak Records. You'll find it pretty hard to get hold of any of their 7" or 10"s, but they released a discography through Coalition Records this time last year which is well worth getting hold of.

ON THIN ICE

About 18 months ago xCANAANx announced their retirement. Unbeknownst to most was that this wasn't going to be the retirement for the members of Canaan. The first band to appear featuring an ex-member was the Break In, but On Thin Ice - a pissed off, old school hardcore band - appeared soon afterwards, and reminded everyone why Nate is regularly daubed Nate 'Hate'. Nate's been around the scene - especially down in the South East - for more years than most, and it was pretty interesting getting his perspective on the current hardcore scene.

RN: You guys took a different direction from the first demo onto the second. Was that deliberate or was that just how it happened because of new members or whatever?

Nate: Yeah basically we changed the lineup and with Dargs coming in, and the kid can't write a soft riff if he tried. He just made it harder. I sing more comfortably with a gruff voice, and I didn't feel comfortable with the stuff we were previously playing. Its still hard, its still fast, its just got a bit more oomph to it now. Its just the way things develop, but I'm happy with it.

RN: In the lyrics you seem to point towards your frustrations with hardcore a lot of the time.

N: Yeah totally. This is it: Basically a lot of the lyrics are inspired by situations I've wound up in. If you hang around in hardcore for a long time it's easy to get frustrated with it, because you realise maybe a lot of people don't live up to what they say, and there's a lot of disappointment around you at times. I think the lyrics are frustrated with a lot of people, but they're inward looking at the same time, trying to work out how to do things our own way, and other people can just go fuck themselves basically! (laughs) We're happy with what we do, and I'm not looking around and putting the blame on anyone else. The lyrics aren't aimed at anyone in particular, it's just trying to vent a lot of frustrations. As I say if you hang around the scene for too long it's easy to get burnt out on stuff. But I try not to. I try to stay positive, for lack of a better word.

RN: There's a lot of 'all talk, no walk'.

N: I don't know, it's hard to say. You know like I say that's just what the lyrics are. Like

the old band that I was in - Canaan - the lyrics in that was much more straightedge focused, and that was influencing my outlook. You get a little bit older and I don't really feel the need to band on about those politics. People already know who I am, and so I gradually got to see little other things that sometimes slip beneath the surface, and that's what I choose to sing about.

RN: So would you say that straightedge is political?

N: Yeah to a degree, yeah. The choice your making is political, it's an informed decision, its personal politics. But we're not a straightedge band. Four of us are, but Will isn't, so it doesn't really have anything to do with us, and that's kind of how we wanted it to be to be honest.

RN: Going back to the lyrics was there a time when you just wanted to quit hardcore?

N: Oh yeah loads of times, but the thing is when I got into it, it meant a different thing, do you know what I mean? It was a way to vent your frustration, and I was attracted to it by bands like Black Flag and everything. And then you stick around. And if you stick around long enough in hardcore you become a 'cool' guy. And so it was like who wants to be 'king of fuck ups'? Not me. That's not what I'm into at all. That's why I get frustrated when you get people who become scenesters just because they've been around for a long time. I think that's shitty. People should contribute, people shouldn't be the 'cool guy'. I can't explain myself very well but that's what I don't want hardcore to be about...

RN: You don't want that hierarchy.

N: Yeah and it bothers me because we get kids coming up to us and they'll be 'Blah, blah, blah, Nate...' and it really bums me out because you know there's four other dudes in the band. And they're all coming here, and this is their first band, why should they be judging against what's came before. It's not on. So yeah I'm pretty anti all that scene stuff.

RN: Coming back to all the Black Flag thing, back in their day it was all about being socially inept.

N: Yeah, exactly. That's what drew me into these things in the first place. And I didn't fit, and - well I'm still not fitting in too well.

I'm still the same as when I was a 17 year old angry kid, I've just got a few more hairs on my balls now! (laughs)

RN: In a way its starting to look more like wider society.

N: It's starting to mirror society and that's what's bothering me. I see a lot of things that I try to get away from in the first place starting to manifest themselves in hardcore.

RN: What kind of thing?

N: I don't really know. It's hard to say. I think it's the way that people act, the way that they conduct their business and the way they treat people more than anything else. I see all that shitty stuff all of the time. I mean there's a lot of minor racism in hardcore which really gets on my tits. There's a lot of kids that make jokes about it, and say that it's not there. But it is. I spent the first 17 years of my life trying to get away from that and I shouldn't have to hear it here.

RN: So would you say that hardcore should be in opposition to the rest of society?

N: Yeah totally. It's a fucking counter culture you know. That's what it's about. It's about standing against. The whole thing should be about standing against, not standing in line.

RN: The problem is though, that as more people get involved they're going to be less fucked up.

N: Yeah that's the thing, it grows. And you don't loose control because no one's in charge, but as things get larger it draws more people in, and they see aesthetics rather than the mechanics of how it actually works. I don't know. To me it feels like going to school a lot of the time, and a lot of the type of people that used to fucking give me a hard time are here trying to run shit, and it bums me out!

RN: So moving on, On Thin Ice have a pretty different sound to Canaan.

N: I mean my personal taste, and the music that I listen to has always been more punk side of hardcore. Metal's cool, I haven't really got a problem with it but the problem with Canaan was that we started to play a lot of these shows and we'd be playing with bands and I'd be watching them and I'd get nothing from them. There was no real anger; a lot of it was posture. I couldn't really relate to a lot of the people around me anymore. Do you know what I'm saying?

RN: We talking about the bigger hardcore bands?

N: Yeah a lot of that stuff, because we're talking about these stepping stone mentalities where people are trying to get to the next level and that's of no interest to me. I don't want to be the big kid on the block. I just want to have my say and that's it. The way that we were going, where we were being pushed a little bit, was getting out of my hands and I wasn't having any fun. So basically when I jacked it in I didn't want to do a hardcore band again. Like I was saying before I was really jaded and pissed off with everything. I just wanted a bit of downtime, chill out, go and be a punk kid again. But it didn't take me too long to get back into being a band. And the reason I got involved with younger kids was because I didn't want to have to deal with 'ex-members' of this band. I just wanted to return to 'zero' and be a punk band again.

RN: Going back to Canaan. I remember seeing you with The Hope Conspiracy and you standing there talking about DIY and just being greeted with a series of blank faces.

N: Yeah. That was it. You'd be saying these things, and these big bands - and not to take anything away from Hope Con, or any of those bands because they do their thing and that's fine - but we've been playing those shows, and trying to get people to realise that there were shows happening of equal quality, with more stuff to say, just down the road, for half the price, in a room where there's this charge of energy. The kids just didn't seem to understand. 'It's in a pub or a community hall, well why do I want to go there?'. People don't seem to understand. And when you go to those big shows you basically put people on a plateau, or a platform and it defeats the whole point of the exercise you know? It puts people up on a different level.

RN: So are you more about, 'We're not a band, we're just a member of the crowd.'

N: Yeah that's exactly it. I mean I can't sing for shit alright, he's not the best bass player (On Thin Ice's bassist chuckles in the background) but we can make a pretty decent noise when we're together, and the whole point of us doing it is so ... I mean if people are sitting there in the audience going, 'Man these guys are shit', then please, the opportunities there, the mechanisms there for you to go and do your thing. [Slight interlude as Nate says farewell to various people].

RN: You were talking about the DIY aspect of stuff.

N: Yeah, this is it. What appeals to me is the hands on aspect. As I say I'm not a particularly talented person. I can't play an instrument. I can't sing. But the DIY ethic of hardcore has provided me the opportunity to leave my mark on the world. Or maybe just get someone turned onto some good music. Just stuff like that. I take a lot from that.

RN: So you're based in Canterbury.

N: Actually you know it's really only me who's based in Canterbury, one of us is actually from Dover, then Will is actually from Heathfield, Alan - who just joined us and actually used to be in Canaan - lives in London now, and Sam lives with Will as well. So we're spread around the South East but we're actually based in the Canterbury area, or rather Thanet, which is kind of the ghetto of the area. But fuck it it's my place, it's where I'm from! It's kind of nice practicing there because it's close to home. Actually they

found a dead body down there the other day, by our practice room, and then we found a used bullet proof vest the other day, along with a brand new fridge/ freezer. It's like a dumping ground for thieves around there. Plus they're all junkies so...

RN: I went to Lido there once, that's Margate though isn't it?

N: Yeah that's Margate, but Thanet is the district that Margate's in. It's where I'm from. It's not a nice place. It's a complete shit hole basically!

RN: Would you say that's influenced your music at all?

N: Oh yeah definitely. That's the thing people look around at Canterbury and they think that it's a big scene, and that a lot of bands come out of that. But for the longest time me and Alan - we'd come up to shows in London when we were 16, get on the train all the time, and we'd just sit around all the time going, 'Damn I wish there could be other kids like us around'.

RN: Oh yeah that's what we get [in Colchester] all the time.

N: I think you get it a lot from kids who are stuck out in the 'sticks'. They're the people who are committed. They're the people that make the effort to go to the shows, they'll make the time because they've got nothing at home, nothing on their doorstep. And time's gone by, we started Canaan, and we had kids from all over the South West, it wasn't just Canterbury, like Southend, London. It seemed to turn heads in Canterbury though and it kind of blew up from there.

RN: Yeah it seems to be a pretty young scene there?

N: Oh yeah really young. Like I'm one of the oldest dudes there and I'm only 28. You know you go up North and it's a really established thing, and you have kids who are forty year olds. I mean just look at bands like Seconds Out. And it's more of a tradition there. Canterbury kind of started with us [Canaan] and the few kids that we had around us. So it's encouraging that kids having taken it along, and that the scene has always done all-ages, it's always been done DIY. We just don't have the spaces or the venues to do it any other way so...

RN: It's just a matter of starting a band?

N: Yeah start a band, write a zine, do a distro. Kids will get into it. It's not quantum physics or rocket science or anything like that. It's just a bit of hard work.

RN: Yeah it's weird how you get some scenes coming out just because there's no alternatives.

N: That's totally it. I'll be honest with you. There's nothing to do from where we're from. I'm sure if there were some alternative pubs or regular shows, be they metal or pop-punk or whatever, then I think that people might have been drawn into that. But because there's nothing, or at least nothing until we started to do stuff, that people started attaching themselves to it. So it's really good. And I'm really stoked that there seem to be a continuing flow of bands coming out of our area.

RN: Yeah it always seems to have good shows down there as well.

N: Yeah it's alright.

RN: So you guys have a CD on Burial, and a 7" on Dead and Gone.

N: That's correct.

RN: How'd that come about?

N: Basically I'd hooked up a few things. We were going to do a split with this band from Cleveland in Texas called My Luck who are friends of ours. It basically sounds like Chain of Strength on smack! (laughs) They're real good. I like them a lot. And we were going to do a split with them and I touted it around to see who was interested, but of course we hadn't played out much we didn't really know what was going on. Burial showed a little bit of interest. They said that they'd put out a split CD version of it, and Courage To Care wanted to put out the split 7". Anyways My Luck went through some problems - through some line up changes - and so did we and it ended up not happening. And then Burial was just like, 'Look rather than finding another band who are blatantly scum-bags like yourselves to do the split with, why don't we just give you your own release'. So we were like, 'Yeah, sound!' And then Ian [Dead & Gone Records] saw us with the new improved line up, and Max [also from Dead & Gone] showed a little bit of interest. They're old friends anyway. They wanted to do stuff with Canaan. So they just picked it up. It's good. It's working with mates as well so you know that it's going to be done right, and that's all I care about.

RN: So it's out in December?

N: Yeah we're going to record it over Hallowe'en where we did all the old Canaan recordings with John Hannon. It's going to be four or five tracks on the 7" and then one extra - on a hidden track - on the CD. The artwork's going to be different for both releases so you won't feel like you're getting ripped off. We've got Pwld from Integrity doing the whole package, which is kind of a big deal for us, because we fucking love them. They're one of my favourite ever bands, not so much these days because of the way that they've gone, but the old stuff, you can't fucking touch it. Amazing. We're stoked that he's going to do it for us. Result!

RN: Seeing as we're talking about 7"s, do you think that hardcore has a tendency to fetishise vinyl a little bit?

N: Yeah I think so to a degree. But if I'm honest I love it. I love my vinyl. I'm not like a big collector or anything, but I just prefer the sound. I don't know whether it's so much the case now but it also makes it less of a product. You can't go in to a store really and just buy a 7". You can't! There's something about it that's just punk rock. The whole thing, the packaging and everything else. We're releasing it on a CD as well because that's how a lot of kids get into music, and we want to make it available so that you can pick it up wherever. But vinyl feels like it's made for kids like me, and punk kids. I don't know, I don't want to lose touch with that. It sounds better as well. You're a bit more attached to it as well. You can't just stick it in and forget about it. [Another interlude of saying farewell to people!] I'm sorry where were we what were we talking about?

RN: We were asking if it sort of becomes multi coloured, the same release on lots of different colours, in limited edition, on ebay and all the rest of that.

N: Yeah, that bothers me a little bit. I mean I'm a hypocrite, I don't have an Ebay account, and I don't buy stuff off there, but I do get a kick out of finding coloured vinyl, but I'm not like a freak for it or anything. We're only doing it on one colour and that's purely for the record release show, so if you come down you get it on a different colour. It just makes



it a bit special and it's nice for people who were there. It's like a souvenir if you like. It's no different to anything else. I don't like printing lots of different colours just for the sake of it. I mean I like stuff that's cool to look at more than anything else but I'm not doing it as some kind of big money making thing!

RN: And then you got the kids who buy the 7"s just to pose out with them cause they don't have anything to listen to them with. (laughs)

N: Yeah I fucking hate that, man. 'So why buy a record if you can't listen to it? Dickhead! What are you thinking?' I don't know. Kids today!

RN: So what are you listening to at the moment?

N: Pulp. Yeah I'm listening to a lot of Pulp. Jarvis Cocker's lyrics are amazing. A lot of people jump Morrissey saying he's the main man for awesome lyrics but I don't know I think Jarvis Cocker's fucking amazing!

RN: He's gone a bit down hill recently with the lyrics talking about rivers.

N: Yeah and weeds and fucking I don't know all of that stuff. I don't know. I wasn't all that into the last album that Pulp did, but the first three albums are concerned: Unmatched. As far as hardcore listening goes; Integrity, Cro-Mags, SecondsxOut, Black Flag. It's all just the usual.

RN: Yeah I heard a rumour about a possible Black Flag cover?

N: (laughs) Crikey the old grape vine runs straight past your house! I only heard that earlier on. Yeah we're talking about doing 'Rise Above'. Well like I was saying, the first ever record I got was Black Flag 'Damaged'. I mean I was 17 when I got it, and I've just never looked back! So yeah it's gonna be our little homage. I don't know how many people are going to get it, but I don't give a fuck. Yeah I think that if we do Black Flag people are going to get destroyed.

RN: Yeah I think kids will dig it.

N: I think so. This is one of the reason that we do a lot of covers, it's not just to score old school points or to say, 'Hey, look what obscure records we got!' No, I genuinely want kids to get into the roots of music. I think that a lot of people come into hardcore these days through different routes to how I did. They come in through metal, or by reading Kerrang! and so they don't always see where it comes from, they just check the current bands or whatever. So when we do stuff we're wanting to turn kids on, and get them hearing something by some of the old bands. A little bit of education!

RN: So is that why you cover Cro-Mags?

N: Cro-Mags, Killing Time, Judge. All great bands, made us the people that we are. I think they've just got that sound that defines hostility and aggression. And you just feel that your back's up against the wall. That's why we relate to them.

RN: So I was looking at the artwork on the demo earlier and it's the hardcore kid stamping on some guys' head.

N: Yeah, yeah.

RN: Is that any significance or is that just something that you thought looked cool?

N: Nah, the thing is that we thought about it and the first demo that we did - that was a rough demo and we had a killer whale and a lot of people gave us grief saying, 'Ahh you guys just want to be Mental you're trying to be goofy'.

RN: Oh I thought it was really cool.

N: Yeah we all really liked the drawing because after doing all the dark shit with Canaan, I just wanted to do something that was fun and goofy. Looks cool on a shirt, kids like it, and it's fun. But then so many kids were going on about it and I wanted to change it on the second demo. The artwork I guess is supposed to be me stomping on some 'Lockin' Out Records' kid's head because we got so annoyed with people

saying, 'Oh you're trying to be goofy, you're trying to be wacky'. And it's like, 'No, not at all but we will tread on you!' (laughs) We don't care too much.

RN: Why 'Lockin' Out'?

N: Nothing, no it's just that it's a trend at the moment. I like a lot of those bands don't get me wrong, but it was just the kids that were into that seemed to be the ones that were giving us the hard time, and is was just like, 'Well it's just a fun image!' It's more like Murphy's Law or something like that - another thing that we're into - and these kids didn't seem to get the references. But nah it's not a tough guy thing or anything like that! (laughs)

RN: So do you think there's more of a set fashion in hardcore then?

N: Yeah I think there's more of anything nowadays. I think if you're the token metal kid you have long hair, and the Slayer shirt and whatever, and if you're a Crucial kid then you're sporting your Nikes and whatever. I don't know. I think it's cool to have an identity, and I think when you're younger everyone wants to feel part of something and relate to something especially if they're an outsider, and they can go somewhere and feel part of something. I haven't got a problem with that at all. But it's when people adopt a uniform so that they think they'll be accepted. And maybe they think, 'Well maybe they'll like me if I look this way'. I feel bad for those people because they kind of miss the point. But I mean I'm as much of a dickhead as everyone else. I've got my Nike's on, and I'm wearing a Cro-Mags shirt.

Interview: Alan, Tom and Shaun. Photos: Jack MacDonald. On Thin Ice have almost sold out of their second demo, but if you get in their quickly they might have a couple left. Failing that they'll have an EP out before Christmas.

The Grabass Charlestons are a really fucking awesome band, this interview is less awesome than it should be cause I showed up with no questions kinda hoping that they'd forget that they had an interview to do. Unfortunately they have memories that would put Elephants to shame. So I guess see this an introduction to the phenomenon that is the Grabass Charlestons, but I think you might get a better understanding of the band if you were to purchase The Greatest Story Ever Hula'd by them from No Idea records. Anyhow the interview was with Will (drums and vocals) and Dave (bass) with interjections from their travelling companion Erin every so often!

RN: So being that you're in the UK and you have a drummer who doubles as a singer do you keep getting references to Snuff?

Will: I think we've only got two so far. I was expecting to get alot more Phil Collins references, since Phil Collins is well... Phil Collins.

Dave: There's Don Henley too.

Will: Yeah so far there's been two questions about Snuff. Zero questions about Don Henley, and nobody has approached me about sounding like Phil Collins.

RN: Are you wanting to be compared to Phil Collins?

Will: Nah, I really, really don't like Phil Collins' music.

Dave: Yeah, I think we all hate Phil Collins' music.

Will: But that one part in 'Collin Air and the Night' that goes [drum noises] that's pretty cool. (laughs) Other than that I'm not a big fan of Phil Collins.

RN: You know I'm not gonna be able to transcribe that right?

Will: I mean I can email you how to spell the drum sounds!

RN: So how's the UK tour been going just in general?

Dave: It's actually been really awesome.

Will: Yeah the UK's been really great. It's definitely been the highlight of our European tour.

Dave: The shows themselves have been really, really great. Comparatively!

RN: So it's been a Europe wide tour then, not just England?

Dave: Well the UK's been the best as far as shows go. I think. Europe's been really great too, but we've had more excitement here I think.

Will: The UK shows have definitely been a lot more fun.

RN: How long have you guys been on tour over here for?

Dave: We've been here four weeks, and we got two weeks left. We go back to France

on Wednesday and then just Germany after that.

RN: I should start writing down questions that I ask bands rather than just showing up late to interview bands. Sorry - bad question - but is there a difference between touring here, and touring the States?

Will: I think in England because it costs like \$45 just to walk out of your front door, and to buy a newspaper costs more money than I make in three and a half weeks of working that it's different. But other than that it's very similar.

Dave: One major difference, is that everywhere we've gone like in Germany, Eastern Europe and Italy, everybody's been really nice about cooking you food, and giving you lots beer to drink, or water to drink. In the States you're really lucky if you get food to eat, or something to drink, and in Germany and places it's always been like that, which is really nice. It's all we need. Beer, water and food, and we're happy! A place to sleep too. They always give us a place to sleep.

Will: You have less travelling time too. In America you can travel ten hours just to play one gig.

Erin: It's a fucking sham.

Will: This is our driver.

Erin: Hey, you have to print this [makes weird bird noises]. (laughs)

RN: I don't know your name though.

Dave: His name is Skip Sunshine.

RN: So how many of you guys came out from America to tour?

Will: Five. There's the three of us, then there's Uri who's kind of the roadie and then there's Erin, who's the guy that gets wasted...

Dave: They're our really good buddies, and it's just fun travelling with them.

RN: Are you all from Gainesville?

Will: I'm from Ohio motherfucker.

Dave: Yeah, he's from Ohio, but the rest of us are from Gainesville. We all live together. It's really cool.

RN: How have you been finding No Idea as a label?

Will: Man it's awesome.

Dave: Yeah it's awesome.

Will: Being in Gainesville - being in bands from Gainesville for a long time - it was like something that.

Erin: You're doing a fucking interview.

Will: You wanna join in on it.

Erin: No, but I want to sit in the fucking van.

Will: Well get in the front then.

Dave: But yeah, No Idea's awesome.

Will: It's just being a band from Gainesville and having a release on No Idea is like, 'That's fucking great.' They're our friends, and it's well run. Yeah it's awesome.

RN: How's the album doing?

Dave: It's been cool coming over to the UK and having people come up to you and say, 'Yeah I have the album. I really like it.' That's very flattering because we've never been here before, and there's people over here who've actually heard our music. That's cool. As far as how it's doing I'm not sure.

Dave?

RN: Do you have anything to compare it to?

Dave: Well there's people walking down the street who don't have one yet, so there's always room for more!

Will: I mean we haven't quite reached the status of Michael Jackson or the Beatles or anything just yet.

Erin: Hey can you understand British people?

Dave: Yeah, I figure being that I'm from here I've worked out the language by now. Why are you having a language barrier thing?

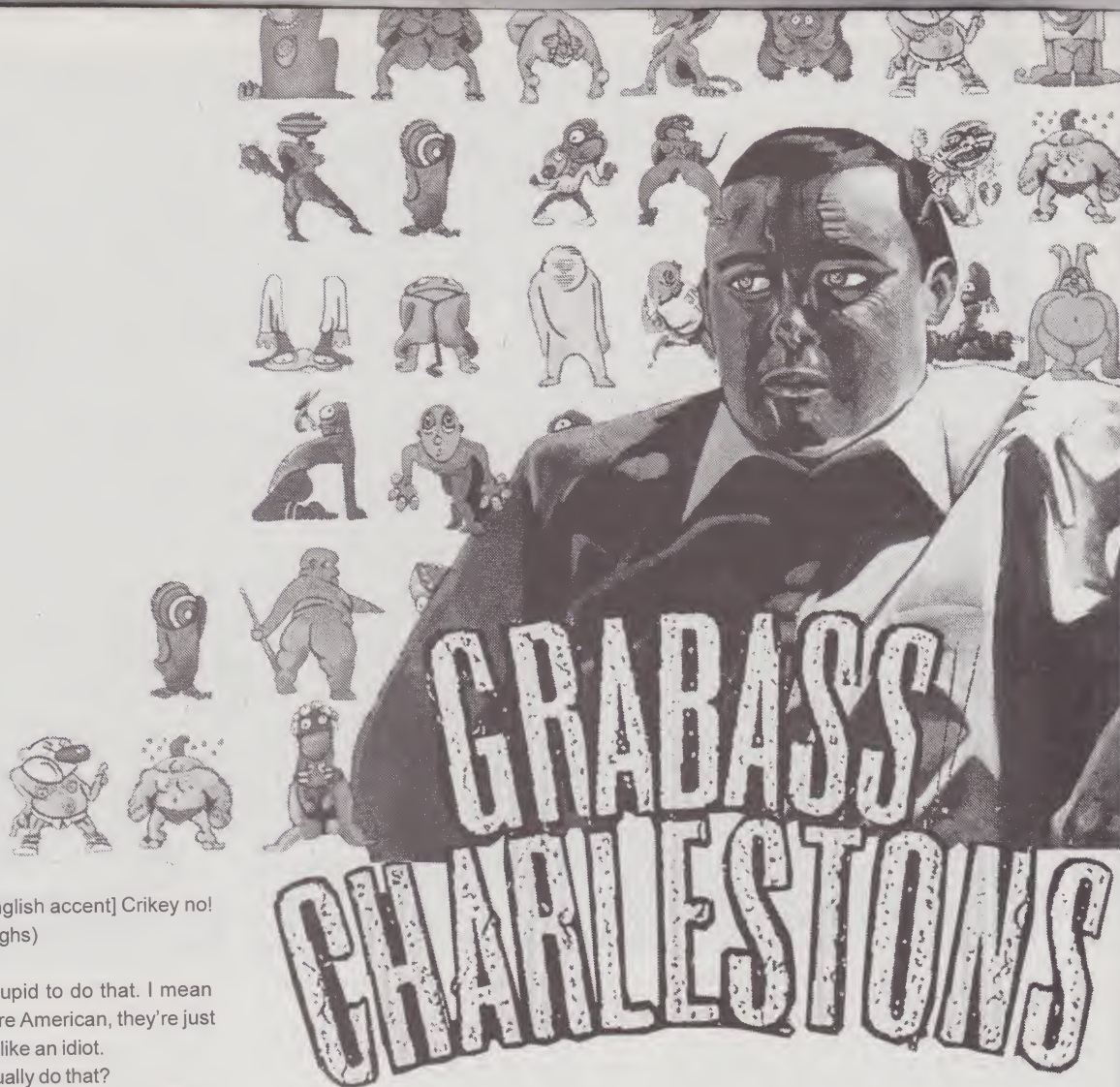
Erin: What, sorry I don't understand! (laughs)

Will: Next question. On with the interview.

RN: Do you really have problems understanding English kids?

Will: Yeah sometimes when they get all drunk, and they speak in a style, or manner of speech that we don't really use. Communication is tricky!

RN: Have you been trying adopt English accents to fool people.



Erin: [adopting English accent] Crikey no!
Hello guv'nor. (laughs)

Dave: Erin does...

Will: I think it's stupid to do that. I mean people know you're American, they're just going to treat you like an idiot.

Dave: People actually do that?

RN: Some tourists occasional do that out in the East End.

Dave: What like saying 'cheers' and 'mate' and stuff?

Will: I say cheers when I say thanks though, but I don't use an accent I just say, [really loud] 'Cheers!'

Erin: [English accent] Alright cheers. [Mumbled drunk speech] And if I don't get a cheers back, you're going to basically get your North Eastern Ohio smashing. End of story.

RN: So are you guys attempting to party in Europe?

Dave: Attempting?

Will: We have successfully partied in Europe.

Dave: Yeah we don't attempt to party. The party just follows us.

Will: I think it's kind of our job now...

Erin: I think what they call it is addiction.

Will: Yeah it's an addiction.

RN: So what do you guys all do when you get back home in the 'real world'?

Will: I'm a computer programmer.

Dave: I cook food for shitty rich people. I cook in restaurants that's what I do. Cook for rich people!

Erin: I stack boxes in a warehouse.

RN: Does the restaurant not mind you going on tour?

Dave: Well most of the time I have to quit my job when I go on tour and then find another one. But I've been lucky enough over the last several years to be able to tour and have jobs that were cool with me going away for a while. Recently I've kind of been in limbo. We'll see what happens.

Erin: Talking of limbo, I will challenge the whole country of England to a limbo contest! (laughs)

RN: Why are you a limbo master?

Erin: No I just thought it be fun.

Will: That's the worst answer I've ever heard! (laughs)

Interview: Edd. Cheers to the band for putting up with my slackness and not being too cross that I clearly had no idea (no pun intended!) what I was doing when I met up with them to do the interview. Also kudos to No Idea for setting it up and generally releasing good records.



Chillerton are straight up punk rock, played by people having a laugh, from the South Coast. For a really long time they've been known simply as that Jets Vs Sharks side project, but maybe with the new EP, and plans to record a full-length album afoot, that's going to change. This interview was done when they came to play the In Arms Reach Collective squat show in London in early August.

RN: OK can you guys introduce yourselves?

Greg: I'm Greg I play drums... and I drive! (laughs)

Jack: I'm Jack I play guitar and sing. That's about it.

Bailey: I'm Bailey, I play bass and get drunk. Ilayna: I'm Ilayna and I sing.

RN: So Greg are you the only one who can drive?

G: Bailey can drive, but he chooses not to. But yeah I tend to get lumbered with the driving both Chillerton and Jets. I love it though so...

RN: So how's it going being Chillerton at the moment?

J: A bit rosey actually! (laughs)

G: Yeah it was a bit touch and go this morning. Never, ever practice on a Sunday morning, that's my one piece of advice for any band! Ten O'clock on a Sunday. Not a good idea.

J: Practicing regularly as well helps.

B: I think from now on though it'll be alright. We've been through a bad patch.

G: Yeah we got into this rut of practicing just before gigs, so we'd practice purely for the gig, and we didn't practice any new songs. So we practiced from 10 o'clock this morning until 1 o'clock this afternoon and

then drove straight here. It was all a bit much...

B: But it was a good gig, and it was worth it.

G: Yeah it was cool except that it was a bit of a mission to find it.

B: There's also been loads of Jets gigs as well recently. Because where I've had to come over from the Isle of Wight - but I'm moving over next week which will be cool - but before that it's been a bit hectic trying to get time off work to play in two bands.

J: And you've been working shifts haven't you?

I: Yeah I've been working early one week and then late the next week so trying to fit practice in was a bit hectic.

G: It's all been a bit mad.

J: But from now on we're all going to quit our jobs, move to this squat here, and just live for the rock! (laughs)

RN: So how have you managed to balance two bands, whilst being stuck on the Isle of Wight and the rest of them being in Portsmouth?

B: Badly. (laughs)

RN: Why didn't you move earlier?

B: I don't know. It's just been work and stuff. Because I was in Portsmouth for two years for university, and then I moved back. It was all right for about four months because I didn't have a job, and was still coming over and sleeping on peoples' floors. Especially you lots! (laughs) But then the last few months have been hard because I work at a big summer theme park place. But I've quit that now, got another job, and I'm moving back over. So from now on it's going to be Portsmouth till death! (laughs)

J: Cheaper than London.

RN: So I'm assuming if you haven't been practicing that you haven't written any new songs?

J: Well it depends what you call new really. We've written a couple with Ilayna and then we've got three in the pipe line, but we've also so far, when we play live, been playing a couple of new ones and a couple of old ones.

B: We've also got a new EP coming out on Bosstunage...

G: And Cat N Cakey.

B: And a split with Blocko, and those songs will be new to some people but they're old to us.

G: Yeah it depends where we play. Some places we play a lot and they know us, and know our songs. But then when we play somewhere like here tonight and people hadn't necessarily seen us before.

J: I saw someone singing along.

G: Yeah it was probably Joey [Jets Vs Sharks singer].

J: It wasn't actually. It was someone that I'd never seen him before.

B: Yeah we don't want to get stuck in that rut where we play songs and they become old for us before it comes out. Like we do want to play stuff that we like as well but...

G: Yeah we recorded back in April, and the first EP that we did took months to come out, and with this one we were hoping it'd be a really quick turnaround but it's now August and it's just taken ages to come out. Not that it's anyone's fault it's just has happened. So it means that when the song has made it onto the new CD, that people want to hear, we've already got bored of it, and are writing new songs for the next thing. So we're one step ahead of 'the listener'. We're bored before they've even heard us. (laughs)

ON THE JOYS OF CHILLERTON IMPERIALISM!

B: But we're going to change all that by practicing more.

RN: So are you new EPs and splits and things?

I: Yeah I am. I'm on the new split with Blocko.

J: And you're on the new EP, you've got two songs on that, and one song on the Blocko split.

I: I guess I don't mind doing the old stuff now because it's still all new to me. But these guys are just like, 'Oh no!'

G: Yeah it's like, 'Fucking hell not this one again.'

J: 'Silent Justice' was the first one we wrote and we're still playing it! (laughs)

G: In fairness when we played it today it's the first time in months.

I: And I really like that one.

RN: [Everyone looks at the pigeons in the courtyard] One thing that me and my friends have been trying to work out for months is where baby pigeons come from, because they're all the same size when you see them.

B: Oh I can fill you in. (laughs) Yeah where I work is on this big water slide, really high up in the air, the main tower, and there's pigeons nesting in there, and there's baby pigeons nesting up there.

J: Really what do they look like?

B: Yeah they're little. But... but, work have decided that there's going to be a cull and that they're going to shoot them all. But we managed...

J: How are they going to shoot them all?

B: They're going to hire a farmer. But yeah we managed to stop them doing it. We all said that we wouldn't work if they did it. We basically all said that we didn't mind cleaning up after them as long as they live there. We're living in the vain hope that one day they're going to shit on a customers head. (laughs) But no seriously we stopped them from getting shot which was cool.

I: That first gig that I did with you guys a pigeon shat on my head. (laughs) That was great! I thought someone was pummelling me with stones, but no it was pigeon shit. (laughs)

B: You love them at the end of the day. You've got to haven't you.

G: Yeah I mean what would you do without them! (laughs)

RN: So do the pigeons only fly off when they're the right size then?

B: I don't know they haven't flown off anywhere yet. It's a bit late in the year though.

G: They're out of season.

I: Hey that's what we should call the new EP, 'Where do baby pigeons come from?'

G: Oh man. Yeah we have serious issues over titles for the CD.

J: Shall we list them?

B: No! (laughs)

G: They're pretty bad. What was the one that we came up with earlier?

J: Fifty Years of Piss? (laughs)

G: No the other one, about robbers and the artful dodger.

B: What you mean 'Thieves, Robbers and the Artful Dodger'?! (laughs) That's proper London that is.

G: Yeah we all hate this place. I don't know how anyone lives here!

RN: What's wrong with London?

G: It's too big, it's too hectic, it's too expensive...

J: We're country boys... and girls.

G: It's just too much. Well actually there's not really *that* much coming up here, but living here, and working here I'd have a nervous breakdown, I think. How do you do it? What's the secret?

RN: I really like it being completely hectic. J: I just don't like the fact that you can't walk from one friends' house to another, without getting the tube.

RN: Yeah it's true that's a bit of a mission.

J: Because where we live in Portsmouth it's really quick just to get to everyone's house.

G: If I was really good at throwing I could throw like a stone through Jack's window. If only I could through round corners! (laughs)

RN: Yeah I think it's completely normal to travel an hour to go visit a friend, and then someone who lives in like Sheffield will be like, 'Well that'd take me to Leeds'.

G: That's the thing. Portsmouth is just a really small city.

J: And we only go to... There's only one bit that we actually stay in.

RN: So wait are Portsmouth and Southampton not connected? Are they not basically the same thing?

B: Nooo.

G: They will be one day.

J: Yeah we'll have to put a big wall in between. (laughs)

G: They're about a twenty minute drive away. Yeah everyone in Southampton hates everyone in Portsmouth. Like in football it's really nasty.

J: We'll have to put snipers up on the wall!

I: Yeah the football thing's ridiculous. Yeah I live right near the football ground, so when there's the Southampton, Portsmouth 'derby' it's horrible.

RN: So have you been playing out much recently? It doesn't seem like you've played London much.

B: No actually we've played London quite a bit. We keep doing the whole Bosstunage thing at the Verge.

G: Yeah Aston sorts us out...

B: He's a fucking legend.

J: He is a fucking legend. I'd like to put that down in capitals.

B: He always sorts us out. He's like everyone's favourite big brother... or uncle. (laughs)

G: But yeah we'd like to get out more. We went on tour back in January. It all got a bit Motley Crüe.

B: This is all pre-Ilayna. Like we did a lot more originally because we used to tag onto Jets gigs a lot because we were only one extra person, and he drives anyway. Like me moving back to the Isle of Wight and having to come back over also made it a bit more of a mission, having to come over for practice and for gigs and stuff!

J: And also we've got some songs to play again.

B: Yeah we've got the new EP which'll mean we've got five new songs we can play, so I think we'll be gigging a bit more after that comes out.

RN: Do you finish uni this year?

B: No I finished last year! And I'm working at an amusement park thing.



J: The grades aren't worth nothing are they!?!
B: I wouldn't know... I dropped out.
J: Yeah so did I.

RN: So what did you study?

B: History. But then I went to study to be a teacher, but I dropped out. Like I enjoyed the history, but I didn't enjoy doing the teacher bit, so I dropped out to focus on the history.

RN: Yeah I've been thinking of doing the teacher thing in a couple of years time.

B: Yeah I was thinking of doing the PGCE, but that'd be for high school, and I wanted to do little kids. (everybody laughs) I mean I wanted to teach little kids. So that's what I started to do, but I didn't really enjoy that at all.

J: You made one cry didn't you Bailey?

B: Yeah I did.

I: What did you do?

J: He shouted at her until she cried! (laughs)

B: Oh come on.

G: He's got to go on a special register now.

J: Yeah the one that Gary Glitter's on! (laughs) How old was she?

B: Nine. But we're friends now!

RN: OK moving on...

J: Swiftly!

G: How ace is Bosstunage?

J: It's very ace.

RN: What about Cat N Cakey?

J: Yes and Cat N Cakey...

G: Yes Daz is a legend.

RN: So are moving on from CNC then?

J: No it's a split release between the two of them. But Daz is indeed a legend.

B: It's weird... It's not like we've had that much to do with Bosstunage. It's just like Aston is more like a helping out, making record, man. He's totally cool but Daz has

more known us for ages. He's like a friend who also backs our record. But they're both the same.

G: Yeah they're both really supportive.

J: It's really weird actually. Not Daz as much, but Aston has put a lot of faith and money into us.

G: Yeah he only saw us that once at the Bosstunage all dayer at the Verge kind of a year ago.

J: Almost a year ago to the day.

G: How did we end up doing that?

B: Oh it was Jack being a fucking scenester on Fracture forums.

J: Oh yeah it was wasn't it, and he was like, 'Would you like to play', and I was like, 'Yeah!' And we went on second after the Sick Kids.

B: It's ace that we're doing a split with Blocko as well because they're awesome people as well.

J: Drunken bastards. (laughs)

G: Of all the bands I'd wanna do a split with it'd be them. We're hopefully also do a split with this local band...

J: Who are really, really good.

G: Yeah who are really good called Circus Act. Check 'em out. They're from Southampton. It's like Police meets Fugazi. And we going to do a cover, and a new song each, and then a Police cover each. But it's been drunken banter for ages so it's probably never going to happen. (laughs) It'd be ace if we did though cause they're a great band.

B: They're on a six way split on Millipede Records.

G: Yeah they're the best band on there.

J: They're there on there with Pilger - who are also really good - Intent, The Demons, Humans the Size of Microphones and that other band...

G: Dysphoma (? - I have no idea if that's how you spell their name!). But they've split up.

J: Nick's a lovely lad.

G: Yeah Nick is a lovely lad. But the music was all a bit clever for us. It was all stoppy and starty and stuff. (laughs)

RN: So are you guys actually going to record a full length or is it going to be EPs all the way?

B: Well... (laughs)

J: Ohh!

B: Hmm shall we say?

J: Yeah apparently Bombed Out are going to do an album.

G: But the rate that we write songs at an album is going to be years away. It'll probably be casio-spazzcore by that point. We'll be something like Trencher, and really artistic!

B: But we've known those guys for quite a while and they pretty much said straight away that they'd want to do something.

J: So yeah the ten songs that Chillerton wrote as a three piece is coming, plus two little extras, with Ilyna all mixed in. And then from now, from this moment on it'll all hopefully be going on Bombed Out.

Interview: Edd. Photos: Cat N Cakey (sorry don't know who actually took them!). You'd have thought having three months in which to transcribe this I wouldn't have left it all to the last minute to do but I've literally had to bash this out a couple of hours before the deadline so I apologies for any typos, things that don't make sense, but hopefully you get the gist of them being an awesome band. Check out their EPs on Cat N Cakey records.



MOST PRECIOUS BLOOD

Justin: I'm Justin, I play the guitar.

Matt: I'm Matt, I play bass.

Rachael: Rachael, I play guitar as well.

RN: So how's it all going on the tour at the moment?

J: Yeah, it's going really good.

RN: Have you finished the mainland Europe bit of the tour?

R: Mostly. We go back for a few more shows.

J: This is at the tail end of the tour though.

R: Yeah we're here for a week and then we fly back for a few more European shows.

RN: You seem to be doing a weird UK tour?

R: (laughs) Well we didn't book it!

MOST PRECIOUS BLOOD SEEM TO BE A LOT LESS POPULAR THAN THEY SHOULD BE. MAYBE IT'S COS THEY'RE LIVE SHOW HASN'T EVER BEEN CAUGHT PROPERLY ONTO CD. WHATEVER THE REASON MORE PEOPLE SHOULD PAY ATTENTION TO THIS BAND. I CAUGHT UP WITH THEM WHEN THEY CAME TO PLAY LONDON IN LATE SEPTEMBER.

RN: How's it been going now that the record's ['My Lady Annihilation'] come out?

You seem to be touring more at the moment.

J: We toured a bunch. I mean we've pretty much been touring non-stop for two years now. Once Rob joined the band we've pretty much been on the road ever since. And now the record's been released by Roadrunner over here, which is cool because it kind of gives it a new life. Yeah I mean this is all we

do. This is our job and our life. If we're not on the road then we're at home checking our emails. Right Matt?

M: Correct!

RN: You finished the day jobs then?

J: Yeah a couple of years ago now actually. None of us have had to work proper jobs in a long time. Yeah we just make our living off of the band.

RN: How did you guys get to be signed to Roadrunner?

R: We're not really signed to them. It's just that Trustkill has a distribution or licensing deal with them.

J: Pretty much everything that Trustkill put out over in the States Roadrunner are going to re-release over here.

R: We don't really have anything to do with it.

J: We're excited about it though. We've never really had a proper label here. It's always been imports and stuff. So it's cool to have an actual label releasing and manufacturing our CD over here.

RN: Did Indecision not have stuff released over here?

R: Yeah, but only on the last album.

J: It should make things easier for touring, and it should hopefully get our name out there a bit more.

RN: Have you had much reaction from kids in Europe?

J: It's been cool. I don't know, I haven't really noticed a difference because of Roadrunner because the CD *just* came out here, even though it's been out for over a year.

R: We should see a difference on our next tour.

J: But we did our first two tours over here supporting Madball and Sick Of It All, and I think those two tours definitely helped us out, getting our name out over here.

RN: Are you working on the new record yet?

M: Not yet, but we will do eventually. We've been touring a lot, and we keep replacing our drummers. The guy that we're touring with at the moment - his name is Colin - is our *tenth* drummer. So it's hard to move forward with writing new material, when you have to teach the new people the old stuff.

RN: How come you've been through so many drummers?

M: Oh they're all crazy (laughs). It comes with the profession. When you choose a profession that's banging on things for a living you've already got one screw loose!

drummer', and had a lot of people write to us, and had some tryouts and stuff.

J: We had a thing on Head Bangers Ball and we said on MTV, 'Hey we need a drummer', which led to us getting emails from a whole load of idiots saying, 'Yeah man, we love Pantera!'

R: We'd already done the tryouts by that point too. (laughs)

J: It was cool that so many people got in touch though. It was just hard to weed through everybody.

RN: So did you put any stipulations on people, like being vegetarian or whatever?

J: They didn't have to be, but it definitely helped. I mean Colin's vegetarian. That stuff wasn't mandatory, but it would definitely help because I mean we're all vegan or straightedge or whatever.

R: The straightedge was the less important. (laughs)

J: Yeah the vegan thing was definitely important. Not smoking as well. We didn't say to anyone, 'You have to be this...' but it helps! It was kind of odd how many people, and really tough because a lot of people played really well, so it was hard to really decide.

R: It did come down a lot to personality.

J: Getting along is almost more important than them being able to actually play the things.

RN: Did you ever think of one of you moving to drums?

R: No, none of us can play them! (laughs)

J: We thought about getting a drum machine and programming everything into it, but that would probably have broken down on us anyway! (laughs)

RN: There don't seem to be many bands at the moment that are vegan straightedge or whatever anymore. Has that led to any negativity?

J: Really it's been awesome. People that know that we're about that and are into it really appreciate it, because there aren't a lot of bands at the moment that talk about

M: No we never really have. There's been so many bands that have already taken that approach, and just even for me growing up in hardcore, it wasn't bands yelling at me to turn vegan that changed my mind, it was reading the literature and talking to people. I figure if this band takes the same approach, I mean there's already been enough people who've come up to this band and said that they've turned vegetarian or vegan because of stuff that they've read from one of the tables at our show or something.

J: I think it's cooler if someone likes the band and then just digs a little bit deeper to see what we're about, and what we believe is important, then that's cool.

RN: Sort of half connected to that, you're quite vocal about your dislike of organised religion, and especially Christianity, have you had any problems with that?

M: We've had a little bit of stuff from other Christian hardcore bands, but not too much.

J: We've more had problems from mainstream stores not stocking our records. A few stores didn't want to sell the record because of the cover. Christian hardcore kids just kind of stick to themselves.

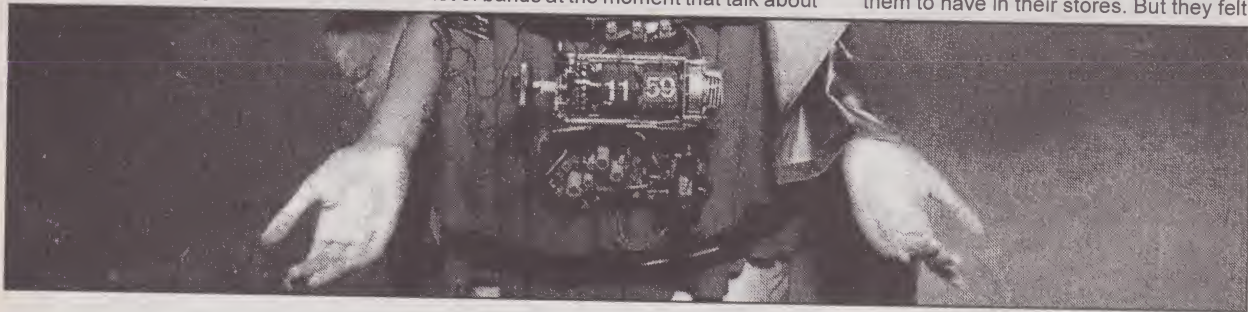
R: They only know the Christian Hardcore bands.

J: They don't even know that we're on the 'Do Not Touch List'.

M: It's almost like it's a totally different scene. Their parents won't let them buy anything unless it's come from the Christian bookstore, which has SolidState records, or has Face Down Records, and stuff like that, and that's the only thing that their family deems safe enough for them to listen to. It's almost like they don't even see us.

RN: Did Wal-Mart eventually stock you?

J: They wanted us to change the artwork all together but we finally went through all this bullshit and realised if we just put a sticker over the bomb then that'd be OK for them to have in their stores. But they felt



J: Yeah, we don't know. We've had people who've left us two days before we were supposed to go on tour. We've had people who've just quit the band for no reason. I don't know. Hopefully this will be it. Colin will stick around.

R: He says that he will, but we've heard that one before! (laughs)

RN: How did you find Colin then?

R: We had auditions for the first time. All the other times we just met people through other people. 'Oh yeah I know this guy who's a drummer' and did it that way. This time we put out a thing saying, 'We need a

it. So people who are vegan or vegetarian usually come up to us and say, 'It's really awesome that you guys do this stuff.'

R: We don't really preach it from the stage, we try to have the PETA stuff wherever we go, so it's there if you want to see it, but we're not on a stage. We're not just preaching about it, or trying to say that we're better than people or whatever.

J: PETA's coming down tonight. We just try to put it out there, and if people come to the show just to see us maybe they'll open their eyes to that, and that'd be really cool.

RN: Did you talk about it more when you first started out.

that the bomb on the cover was too obscene, and that people'd freak out if they saw us. I don't know for us it's like... I mean I guess hardcore's just become a big fucking thing, but for us having a CD in Wal-Mart it's like, 'Who fucking cares!' But for our record label it was like, 'Oh my god Wal-Mart isn't going to sell your record.' Who the hell goes to Wal-Mart to buy a fucking record. I suppose you just have to adjust to the times or something. We didn't really want to, but we sort of had to.

RN: Was the aim of the cover just to annoy people?



J: I think it only annoys people who are offended by it. If they're offended by it, then cool, but that's not what we were looking for. That's just what we believe. We were just trying to say that the world would be a much more peaceful place if it wasn't for these organised religions. Some people read into it, and some people saw it, and thought it was awesome, and totally believe what it's about, and some people saw it and just thought it was blasphemy. So...

M: There it is! (laughs)

RN: Did the cover for 'Release the Cure' have a similar sort of effect of dividing people?

J: I think it did but something like that a lot of people...

R: Yeah it did, but it wasn't the same as the religious thing, it was just lots of people being weirded out by the conspiracy theory stuff that we put in.

J: I think religion is way more polarising, whereas something like the health care system is like... Well everyone knows it's fucked so most people just sort of agreed. I think that the 'Our Lady...' cover was a lot more polarizing.

RN: Have you seen the new MRR?

J: No not yet.

RN: Oh OK cause there's a column by Bill Florio about bands buying on to tours and stuff.

J: Oh yeah he wrote to me about that.

RN: Like does that shit happen a lot?

J: All the time.

R: It's the way they organise big tours now, you have to buy on. Like Ozzfest, all the

hardcore bands that played on it had to pay shit loads of money to get on it and play, and a lot of big tours they'll want you to pay for the bus or whatever. It's just standard now.

J: It's all fucking hand in glove bullshit. It's all fucking politics, and it's not about how good you are, and it's not even about who you know anymore, it's about how much you have to pay people off, and get on their tour.

RN: Do people ask you?

J: We've never done that.

R: Well we've done it to an extent.

J: Well we've never had Metallica call us up and said, 'You know if you give us ten thousand bucks we'll put you on tour with us', that's never happened.

R: More like, 'Help us pay for half the bus'.

J: But there are flat out tours where you have to pay just to be on the tour. 'You want to be on this tour, you've got to pay to be on this tour.' And kids go to Ozzfest and they go, 'Oh these bands are on Ozzfest - wow these guys must be amazing.' No, they're on Ozzfest because they fucking paid to be on Ozzfest. And fuck it, if our label pays for us to go out on Ozzfest then we'll go too. That's what it's all about.

RN: Has that always happened or is it a recent thing?

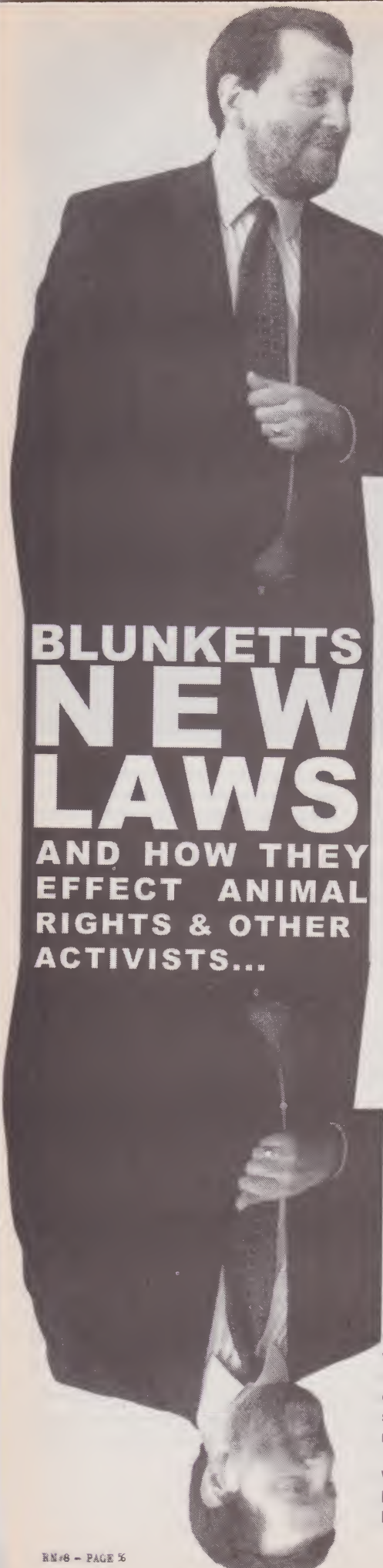
J: It happens a lot more now. Kids seem to like tour packages. They'd rather see Metallica, Slayer, Most Precious Blood and fucking Throwdown and have it called 'Fuck You In The Arse' tour, with a fucking name and the whole fucking thing you know, and in order to do that - because these things cost a lot of money - in order to fund

something like Ozzfest the bands have to pay to get on, that's just how it is. That's not saying that the bands that do that are any less of band. I mean if our label - and there's no way in fucking hell that they would - but if our label said, 'Hey we'll give you the money so that you can go and do Ozzfest' we'd fucking do it in a heartbeat. But we'd know the whole time that we were there that we were on it only because we'd paid to be on it. That's what it's all about. But we try. As much as we can we try and stay away from that shit.

RN: Do you think it does damage local bands? That seemed to be the thing that Bill Florio was getting at.

J: Well I think that it damages. In each city rather than being 'Slayer, Hatebreed and shit-heads from up the block' it's gonna be every night the same thing. And it's just kind of this big convenient antiseptic package. Every night the circus is in town, and it's the same show every night. 'Six O'clock doors, Eleven O'clock close'. Shit like that. So it does kill local bands because for a lot of local bands it's a big deal to get onto one of these big tours, and that doesn't happen much anymore. It definitely hurts it. There's still going to be other shows going on, those concerts don't really matter.

Interview: Edd. Photos: Jack McDonald. Most Precious Blood have two records out on Trustkill Records. Thanks to the band for chatting with me.



BLUNKETTS NEW LAWS

AND HOW THEY EFFECT ANIMAL RIGHTS & OTHER ACTIVISTS...

"From correspondence and meetings with victims of intimidation, we are well aware of the seriousness of animal rights extremism for the bioscience sector and for companies doing business with the sector. The Government have made it clear that intimidation and harassment of those going about their lawful business is totally unacceptable." Caroline Flint Home Office Minister April 2004

"New law to target animal rights extremists", has become a regular headline, seemingly each month bringing a new crackdown on the heads of those who dare to campaign against animal abuse in British laboratories. The vivisection industry, its cruelty exposed time and again, has effectively lost the argument, and is reduced to pathetic caricatures of logic and appeals to sentimentality like forcing the public to choose between a little girl with leukaemia and a rat. (Funny, it's never a dog Joe public is asked to put to death) The state wishes to spare itself the inconvenience of protest. Of course the fact that the majority of animal testing carried out at HLS [Huntingdon Life Sciences] involves agro-chemicals not medicine is not allowed to enter the picture. Science (i.e. vivisection) vs. Sentimentality (The animal rights movement) is the only argument the press will deal with. Meanwhile the state is quite open about its intentions to crush the animal rights movement.

Animal Rights activists have often found themselves at the forefront of the attack on civil liberties. The aggravated trespass sections of the 1994 Criminal Justice Act used the activities of hunt saboteurs as an excuse to criminalize anyone disrupting a lawful activity in the open air. As well as a crackdown against the saboteur movement the same bill was swiftly used against road protesters, travellers, and free party sound systems. A number of offences have been created over the last decade to specifically target animal-rights for example Section 42 of the Criminal Justice and Police Act 2001, which introduced a range of police powers to deal with the increasingly popular tactic of home demonstrations. Once again what we're dealing with here is not violent incidents already adequately covered by existing legislation but gatherings aimed at shaming vivisectionists in front of their neighbours.

Why the constant need to bring in new laws? What extremists do is already virtually by definition illegal. Smashing windows,

putting paint stripper on cars and attacking people with baseball bats is against the law. That didn't stop the industry pressure group Victims of Animal Rights Extremism from presenting them as reasons for new laws. In any case animal rights offenders are already disproportionately sentenced for anything they do get done for. (A classic example being the three women sent down for a year each for stealing a piece of paper from Roche in 2002). It is clear that the government finds the animal rights movement extremely threatening.

The movement is a threat to the status quo because the government is committed to animal abuse. It is state corporatism which provides the impetus for the wish to see the animal rights movement go under. For a start the identification of an animal as something which has its own intrinsic worth and rights as opposed to a financial value is a direct ideological confrontation with capitalism. The liberation of an animal is a declaration that freedom is worth more than financial gain. The hand in glove closeness of the New Labour project with pharmaceutical companies and the so-called life science industries is well documented. Lord Sainsbury, corporate fat cat and enthusiastic supporter of GM foods is the government's science minister. He bank rolled the Labour Party to the tune of £2 million in 1999, not that it made much of a dent in his £2 billion fortune. He is a powerful advocate of vivisection. It should come as no surprise that the Labour Party has continually gone back on its promises to control vivisection. In fact 2004 saw an increase in the number of animals used in scientific procedures and a huge increase in the number of primates used. The likes of Sainsbury wish to see the increase in knowledge about genetics harnessed to profitable ends. Life forms are to be analysed, dissected and patented. The very structure of life itself is being packaged and sold off for corporate profit. The logic of animal liberation is an obstacle to this wholesale looting and hence the government's enthusiasm for the legislative sledgehammer.

A hint of the true agenda can be found in the following extract from a Sunday Telegraph article.

"The influential National Association of Pension Funds (NAPF), whose members control 20 per cent of the shares on the London stock market, is planning a series of meetings with the Home Office, the Corporation of London and other City institutions to formulate a plan to try to prevent a repeat of the



campaign of intimidation against Huntingdon. The NAPF fears that the producers in a number of controversial industries such as armaments could be at risk, as well as companies that are vulnerable to animal rights groups."

The organization proposed the setting up of a £10 million fighting fund for businesses targeted by activists. Morals must not be allowed to interfere with the market. Note the fear that this type of activism will spread to other "ethical" campaigns. The state knows that ordinary people don't like vivisection but how much more do they hate arms dealers? No little girls with leukemia to cynically manipulate through the distorted lens of PR there. In fact the Stop Bayer campaign against the GM giant led to Bayer's withdrawal from the UK and the end to commercial genetic modification here in the foreseeable future. A lot of corporate cash down the plug hole there. The obvious solution is to give the police the power to arrest, silence and disperse.

The new laws and their institution seem to be aimed at destroying the base of the animal rights movement. The problem for the state is that since the Live Exports campaigns of the early nineties, the animal liberation movement has grown and grown. Demonstrations at Consort (a beagle breeding facility for the vivisection industry) which numbered in the hundreds were turned into crowds of thousands when the campaign turned to Hillgrove Farm, a supplier of cats. Both places closed down after police operations, costing millions. As did Shamrock farm, a monkey importers and Regal Rabbits. All these campaigns saw a mixture of public mass demos and covert actions.

The growth of this movement represents a real threat. The theory would seem to be that extremism is like a pyramid the bigger the base the more people willing to break the law at the top. The state approach is to chip away at the bottom of the pyramid.

By restricting the activity of peaceful protestors it is hoped that they will be discouraged, leave the struggle and those on the extremes will be starved of support and the movement will wither away. Hence the emphasis in the new laws on controlling small scale demonstrations.

Several pieces of recent legislation combine to give police much greater powers in relation to small gatherings of people. Section 42 of the Criminal Justice Act [CJV] 2001 gives the police powers over demos

outside peoples houses, i.e. they can warn those demonstrating to leave the vicinity immediately. Under the Anti Social Behaviour Act 2003 the number of people required to trigger police powers to control an illegal gathering has been reduced to two people. And the "organiser" of the gathering, if two people can be said to have an organiser, is liable for up to three months' imprisonment. (The police do have to suspect that disorder might arise as a result of the gathering but do not have to prove it.) I asked the Home Office if there were any plans to reduce the number any further, their spokesman said "Not yet". Basically this means the police can tell anyone at any time what to do. You might be able to challenge it in court but I wouldn't hold your breath.

Anti Social Behavior Orders [ASBOs] are perhaps the most draconian legal instrument the government has up its sinister sleeve. An ASBO can be applied for by police or local authorities, and crucially they only require a civil burden of proof, i.e. on "the balance of probabilities" rather than "beyond reasonable doubt". Hearsay evidence is permitted and they have been granted on the flimsiest of pretexts. The classic liberal mistake here is draw a line between the acceptable face of ASBOs, i.e. controlling - in their eyes - proles on council estates and unacceptable uses such as using them on protestors. The truth is that the Animal liberation movement is being targeted for exactly the same reasons as every one else, we just won't buckle down and work hard to enjoy our ride on the day-glo consumerist merry go round that is New Labour's vision. Anti state or anti-market, its all anti-social now, a useful catch all phrase for those in power. An estate near Brighton now has permanent "dispersal areas" that amounts to a curfew for all people aged under eighteen. ASBOs can be used to impose what are actually permanent bail conditions. Staffordshire Police are seeking to impose one on a campaigner against Newchurch Farm. If convicted of aggravated trespass on a golf course, Kevin White will be barred from East Staffordshire for life. He is in no doubt that this is because of his persistent protesting against the guinea pig farm saying, "Ninety five per cent of their case is to do with the farm, it's nothing to do with the golf course, which is supposedly the incident I'm being charged over."

Other changes in the law include the ability of the police to demand the name and address of anyone they 'reasonably' suspect of being involved in 'anti social

behaviour', and arresting them if they cannot prove their identity. A group of pro Palestinian campaigners have run into this one after a demonstration outside a factory, making Caterpillar bulldozers. Interestingly in this case literature which the prosecution have referred to as threatening was actually a copy of U.N declaration! It won't be long before animal liberationists run foul. Especially with this introduction of I.D cards through the back door. (How else are you supposed to prove your I.D?)

Police stop and search powers are increasing with each new act. The High court judgement that the Met hadn't exceeded their powers in using the Terrorism Act to stop and search people at the DSEI arms fair basically means that the 'sus' laws, the use of which provoked the Brixton Riots in the eighties, are back. Obviously it is Muslim youth this time who are bearing the brunt of it this time around.

In the pipeline, together with usual media hype about animal rights 'terrorism' (What self respecting 'terrorist' group would manage to only slightly injure one man - Brian Cass - in its entire history?) are a few more laws. It will become illegal to demonstrate outside a home at all, to engage in persistent harassment of one company, (another granting of human rights to a corporate entity) and police powers to search houses will be widened. Add this to the universal retention of DNA samples whether a crime is proved or not and the daily growth of the Surveillance State and the outlook for human rights, let alone, animal rights is pretty gloomy.

But in many ways the hysteria can function for us. A new criminal justice bill every year is a sign of desperation not strength. The state is at its wits end trying to control a growing movement which has the ability to internationalise its struggle, force big companies off the stock exchange and major trans-national banks to do their bidding. Every new law signals to the masters of high finance that the Animal liberation movement is a force to be reckoned with, a force not easily controlled and so they fold and invest their money elsewhere. The movement is exposing the links between global capital and domestic government and the new laws are nothing but a reaction to that.

Links

For more information on all laws relating to protestors go to freebeagles.org, or your usual links of schnews.org.uk, urban75.com, and enrager.net

*I CAN'T WAIT UNTIL
THIS WAR ON
TERRORISM IS OVER
AND THERE'S NO
MORE TERRORISM!*



IN ARMS REACH

SCHNEWS.ORG. /

The War on Terrorism—

it may not do much against terrorism,
but it sure does a lot for War.

And if one of your family and friends was killed in the 'War on Terrorism' I'm sure you'd just shrug your shoulders and say, 'Well Americas' got to do what it's got to do, and if they say they were terrorists, well, then I for one believe them'. It's not like you'd try and take some retaliation.

Yeah, the worlds a whole lot safer now...

*RIGHT! REMEMBER HOW WE HAD
THAT WAR ON DRUGS, AND NOW
YOU CAN'T BUY DRUGS ANYMORE?*

Hot Town, Summer in the City

An Anarchist Analysis of the 2004 Republican National Convention Protests

by: Alexander Troochi, CrimethInc. International News Agent Provocateur

RNC REDUX: Hot Town, Summer in the City

The Republican National Convention was the ultimate slight to New York: those who made careers and a quick buck off the September 11th events returned to feast like vultures on the corpses of the dead, attempting to rally support for a failing war and a disastrous regime by parading around near the site of Ground Zero. As one might suspect, there were going to be protests, courtesy of an amalgamation of New Yorkers and out-of-town protesters, direct action anarchists and anti-war pacifists, community groups and Marxist sects. The question of the hour was: Were the protests going to bring the house of cards down?

The answer is no, they didn't, but there were signs that this will be possible—and soon. The RNC 2004 protests showed that resistance is possible in this country quickly sliding towards old-fashioned homeland fascism: a vast multitude of people are getting ready to roll against the corporate aristocracy that runs this country. And many in New York are willing put their bodies on the line against the regime.

To understand the historic importance of this protest, one must know a little of its genealogy. The RNC 2000 protest in Philadelphia was the first major failure of the anti-globalization movement, a movement that had seemed unstoppable after Seattle, and its long shadow hung over the minds of many of us as we prepared for the 2004 RNC. The failure in Philly was primarily a failure of imagination and organization: the organizers attempted to repeat a "shut-down the city" protest—complete with blockades, a risky proposition on the East Coast where those skills are less common than on the

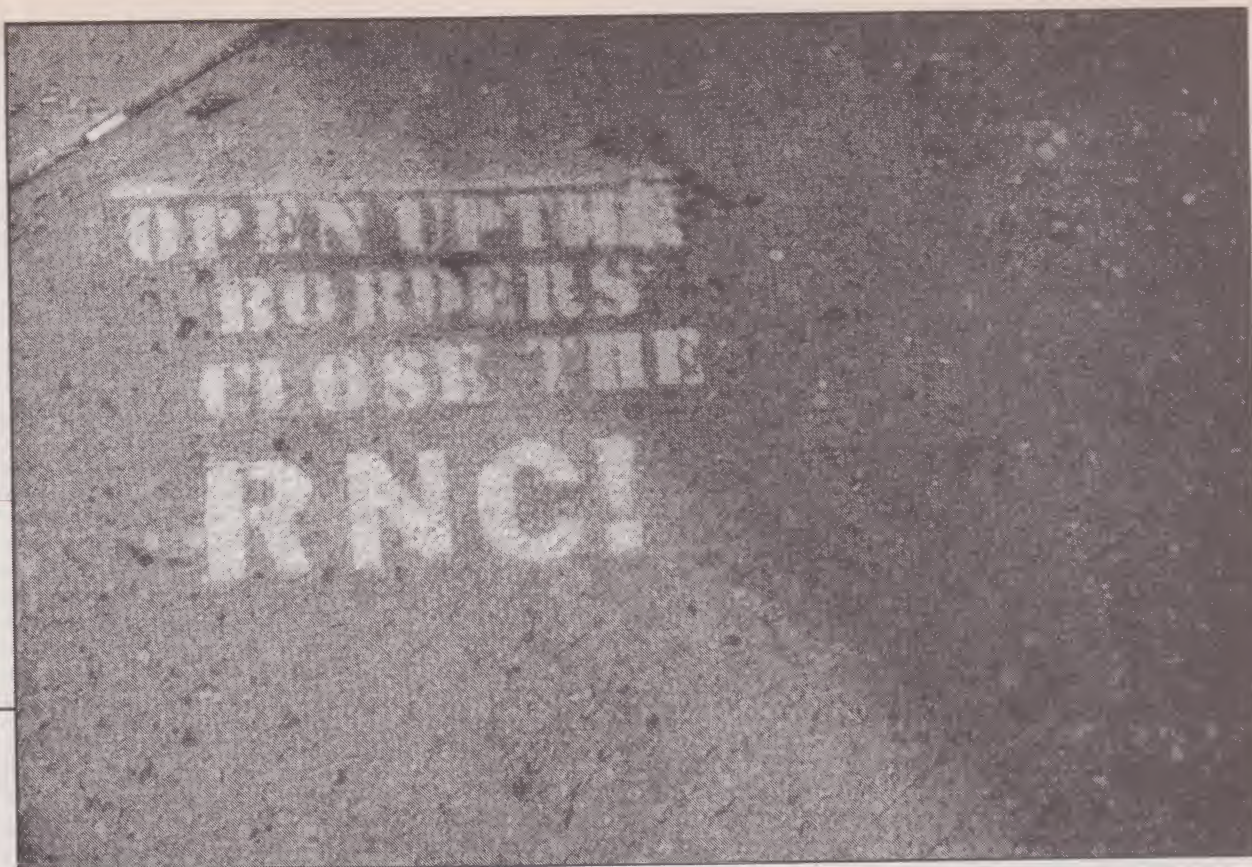
West Coast—without sufficient numbers. Heavy-handed police tactics succeeded in thwarting this strategy, setting a precedent for militarized repression that culminated in the so-called "Miami Model" during the protests against the Free Trade Area of the Americas ministerial in 2003. Ever since the RNC 2000 protests, anarchists have whispered about decentralized action as an alternative to badly-planned centralized action.

Before September 11th, the anti-globalization movement was becoming increasingly anarchist in orientation, pursuing increasingly militant tactics in the streets and developing a sophisticated analysis of global capitalism. After September 11th, the anti-globalization movement let the traditional authoritarian Left, such as the Marxist-Leninist ANSWER or their more liberal counterparts in UFPJ, seize control of the anti-war movement. These groups discouraged actual direct action, while occasionally borrowing the rhetoric of confrontation from more militant groups. Soon, these elitist organizers had set the movement back to marching around in circles. While many did their best—as massive direct actions from San Francisco to New York on the eve of the Iraq war showed—to put their bodies on the line to halt the war machine, the authoritarian Left did all it could to divert energy away from genuine resistance. As any veteran of the anti-war movement of the Sixties could have foreseen, mere marches could not and did not stop the war. All the same, the vast networks, such as Indymedia, created by the militant anti-globalization movement became vital to the anti-war movement—the networks and influence of the anarchist underground were continuing to spread.

Popular hatred against the government, particularly as symbolized by its leading figurehead George W. Bush, was at an all-time high. Kids were coming home in bodybags from a war based on lies, the economy was in shambles, and the government was obviously run by a self-interested rich elite. This was a socially volatile situation to say the least. Unlike at the 2000 RNC, there were going to be massive numbers of protesters, and it appeared people were finally fed up enough to do something more than march in circles. The gambit was that the spirit and tactics of Seattle could merge with the massive numbers of the anti-war movement: combined, they would be unstoppable.

A year in advance, the website www.rncnotwelcome.org had been set up to coordinate these protests. Although anarchists were often caricatured as an alienated balaclava-clad minority, in reality they were the backbone of the organizing around the RNC. The main group that handled legal at the RNC was the explicitly anarchist People's Law Collective, with the help of the National Lawyer's Guild. The noRNC Clearinghouse meetings were started by anarchists, and these meetings enabled a wide variety of groups to plan for the protests. Anarchists organized housing, put up posters, and, with their usual humility, did much of the dirty work, without bothering to tell the world of their political affiliations.

In New York City, during the months preceding the RNC, Republicans not only lacked support but were openly hated. For example, while I was eating a falafel in Queens, the chef came out and gave me a flyer for the anti-RNC protests, telling me to be there. I assured him I was going to be. Later, I observed a well-dressed, evidently



Republican young man tearing down anti-RNC posters. He was caught red-handed in the act by myself and a New Yorker, and with the approval bystanders, was quickly scared into running away. One local actually grabbed the poster and put it back up.

New York is the essence of the city taken to its almost illogical conclusion: miles and miles of skyscrapers and concrete, so large that it is always teetering on the edge of collapse, with only 40,000 cops standing between capitalism and chaos. Among its massive numbers, there is a wide range of groups that have been excluded, marginalized, and exploited: everyone from old Puerto Rican men working in community gardens in the Bronx to radical lesbian biker performance artists. This diversity in turn makes New York one of the most explosive and exciting places for radical politics. Yet New York is also large enough to be home to some of the most retrograde elements in North American radical politics: ridiculous Leninist cults such as the Revolutionary Communist Party, liberal activist superstars, and continual infighting. This makes planning a centralized protest almost impossible—there are simply too many variables to take into account, and even anarchists have trouble getting along together. But if one thing could draw people together, it was the common outrage against the Republicans.

Decentralization Beyond the Point of Return

The noRNC Clearinghouse meetings were crucial for creating the infrastructure needed, opening a non-denominational space in which everyone from United for Peace and Justice (UFPJ) to Shutdown

NYC could get together to coordinate, make announcements, and connect to others. As the RNC drew closer, the noRNC Clearinghouse meetings had so many participants that it took hours just for all the groups to proclaim their plans. Instead of becoming a spokescouncil for the entire protest, the clearinghouse transformed itself into the noRNC bazaar. The bazaar was a far cry from a consensus meeting; groups set up tables and solicited people to join their actions. There was a spokescouncil for the A31 Direct Action on Tuesday, but this spokescouncil only dealt with that day's actions, not the protest as a whole. Much to everyone's surprise, St. Marks Church wasn't set up explicitly as a convergence center, although that space functioned as an informal hang-out and meeting spot. Initiatives such as the Anarchist World's Fair encouraged anarchists to come early, and events ranging from the academic "Life After Capitalism" to the down and dirty "Really Really Free Market" heightened the energy in the air. The RNC was a grand experiment: everything was completely decentralized. As the communique delivered by the NYC Anarchist Grapevine said, "We should all finally face it—there is no Big Plan." Just show up and see what was going down, or organize something yourself—that was the zeitgeist. Beautiful maps of New York City featuring multi-racial kissing pirates, subway stops, and corporate targets were provided a la carte.

As the dates of the RNC drew nearer, some were getting butterflies in their collective stomachs about this lack of concrete action plans. One advantage of openly decentralizing the action plans was that many groups creatively called for autonomous actions: the "Mouse Bloc" and

"Chaos on Broadway" call to interrupt the delegates as they watched Broadway shows, the humorous "Man in Black Bloc" call to reclaim Johnny Cash from the Republicans, and a host of increasingly surreal calls like the "Viking Bloc" were all examples of this. While this decentralized model opened space for autonomous action, it was unclear if the maturity and vision to plan even a single fully realized, effective decentralized action existed anywhere. The lack of a central spokescouncil prevented incompetent groups from taking control and instead invested faith in the people themselves, which is an inherently anarchist strategy for success; however, the fact of the matter was that while many were empowered, many coming in from out of town were bewildered. Most had neither the experience nor the time to organize their own direct actions or even navigate New York City properly. This enabled authoritarian groups that organize behind closed doors to take center stage with their plans to march everyone aimlessly around—you guessed it—in circles.

Predictably, they called for a large permitted march to go right by the Republican National Convention's location at Madison Square Garden. The march was to take place on Sunday, before the Convention even began, in order to maximize turnout and minimize possible conflict with the State. As one right wing website put it, "If this is the best the Revolution has to offer, the Establishment is safe." Monday was reserved for not only one, but two, three, many Poor People's Marches. Then out of nowhere, a group of West Coast activists parachuted in with the help of the usual suspects—the activists known during the RNC 2000 debacle as the Direct Action Network—to plan massive nonviolent civil

disobedience in New York on Tuesday, hoping to repeat a success like the anti-war demonstrations in San Francisco.

The unprecedented decentralization of the RNC protests was perhaps the only way to organize in the chaos that is New York City, yet it left protesters with a schedule of events curiously similar to the Philly 2000 RNC protests. In fact, the schedule was almost exactly the same, down to the very days of the week. As experience has shown us consistently, anyone who suggests that protesters should divide their forces over a few days, with each day being reserved for one special type of protest, is a danger to all. Such a strategy always pans out in this way: on the first day of protest, usually a Sunday, there is a big march of a supposedly broad-based coalition, and the limits of this march are controlled by a small hierarchical group. Since these liberal and Marxist groups usually are well-funded, they can bring in bus-loads of people to march with them; they generally use the opportunity to hand-out mass-produced signs, sell newspapers, and bore people senseless with an endless array of carefully selected speakers. Most people leave town immediately after the big march is over. The next day, often a Monday, the various poor people's marches begin, usually being mostly local people of color groups. Since poor people are inherently more dangerous to the State than liberals marching around in circles, they get hassled or attacked by the police. Anarchists support both of these marches and join in them, creating infrastructure and support work often for both. On the last day of action—a Tuesday—people interested in direct action are finally permitted to take the reigns, but in complete isolation. They take to the streets by themselves and, having announcing their plans all over the Internet, are quickly arrested and brutalized by the police. Now that many of us have experienced this way of scheduling protests several times, it's hard not to see it as a sign of either sub-human intelligence or collaboration with the State—but in this aspect the protests against the RNC 2004 appeared to ape those against the RNC 2000.

After Seattle, everyone agreed that we couldn't repeat that particular model, as the element of surprise was gone. However, while we have lost the element of surprise in massive demonstrations, the other crucial element of Seattle that can and should be repeated is synchronicity. The combination of well-coordinated organized lock-downs, massive and festive demonstrations that provided support for direct actions, and decentralized autonomous actions like squat take-overs and Black Blocs, *all at the same time*, is what made the Seattle protests impossible for the police to control. Whenever any of these elements is isolated, it will most likely fail. Our power lies in the ability of diverse groups to coordinate, each offering its strengths in mutually beneficial relationships with other groups that may be completely different in ideology and tactics. This is the true strength of any network-based anti-authoritarian movement. To declare a return to staid leftist marching under a unified banner as one faceless

mass, or to proclaim that "militant Black Blocs" or "non-violent civil disobedience" is the one true tactical way forward—both of these approaches are ridiculous and potentially detrimental to what potential we have. Anarchists should set the stage, then do whatever it is they do best in conjunction with everyone else, all at the same time. It's a simple recipe, yet it's never really been repeated in the United States on a large scale since the IMF/World Bank protests in 2000.

Many anarchists organizing for the RNC were veterans of Seattle and other successful anti-globalization protests, and were hoping that the RNC protests would follow such a model. Yet UFPJ, lest their good names be tarred with the taint of actual direct action, did their best to keep their march separate from the direct action and civil disobedience. In the vain hope that we could somehow make an alliance with them, many anarchists did not openly confront UFPJ. In reality, old-fashioned Leftist groups like the UFPJ leadership are taking advantage of all the hard work of the anarchists and then throwing them into the jaws of the State. Since many Marxist-Leninists and liberals, as well as the frightening development "anarcho-liberals," are career activists, they don't actually want to change things—if they did, they'd be out of a job—so they naturally avoided any real disruption of the RNC.

Fortunately, anarchists and others who were more interested in action sent out calls for direct actions. These included a giant critical mass organized by Time's Up, a unified direct action and direct democracy "Don't Just Vote Take Action" contingent in the UFPJ march, a "Mouse Bloc" to personally confront the delegates Sunday night, and the A31 call to "shut down the RNC" on Tuesday. The possibility that the massive numbers of the anti-war movement would join in with the direct action tactics of the anti-globalization movement was negated by the scheduling of events. However, despite the best attempts of the police, media, and liberals to demoralize and divide the protesters, including a few "radicals" like Todd Gitlin humorously showing their true colors by saying any protest would just play into the hands of the Republicans, it was clear that something big was going to happen.

Things were heating up, and even UFPJ's rhetoric took a turn to direct action as they were prevented from going to Central Park and instead forced to turn around and go to Union Square. Although the war of words over which symbolic goal would be reached was a bit humorous, Mayor Bloomberg and the powers that be were getting scared. In an act of high comedy, the City began offering discounts at shops and museums to protesters who signed an agreement to be peaceful. Obviously the mayor hoped to obscure the fact that many of the protesters were there primarily to act against capitalism. Had the Queen offered to give Boston Tea Party protesters some Nestea coupons in return for a promise of pacifism, would we still be swearing "God Save the Queen"? All over the news the media proclaimed that "Anarchy Inc." was

going to take down the city. In a special "leak" from the police, the media revealed fifty of the country's leading anarchists, each with fifty loyal followers willing to sacrifice themselves for their leader (!), were being trailed by individually assigned goon squads. Obviously, all the money in the newfound massive intelligence budgets of the NYPD and FBI can't make up for their fundamental lack of human intelligence. Virtually no anarchists any of us know were actually trailed, except for those who have appeared on major television channels in the last few years as "anarchist" media spokespeople. We all know those people are not involved in direct action in reality, due to the nature of their roles as media spokespeople.

In an effort to help turn the tide of fear, a media event was held entitled "Are You an Anarchist? The Answer May Surprise You." The participants ranged from the preacher Father Frank Morales of St. Mark's Place to Kazembe Balagoon, author of "Queering the X: James Baldwin, Malcolm X, and the Third World." As Warcry reminded the media, the real violence is never caused by the demonstrators, but the capitalist system, which is busy destroying the foundations upon which all of life rests. Since neither candidate is in favor of abolishing capitalism, no matter who wins the election, we all lose. Starhawk ended the session by reminding the media that the President personally condones violence as our official foreign policy, which puts a few streets clogged by sit-downs and the possibility of a broken window into perspective.

The Protest that Never Sleeps

The protests began in earnest on Thursday with an upbeat touch, as the RNC2DNC march arrived from the Democratic National Convention in Boston wearing Zapatista masks, breaking the law to bring the message of the Lacandon jungle home against the impressive backdrop of New York City's glass-plated skyscrapers.

Time's Up! had been busy repairing bikes for weeks before the RNC. Their work set the stage for the great role bicycles played throughout the entire protest. On Friday night, the largest Critical Mass in NYC history seized the street in defiance of the terrifying environmental costs of this oil-driven civilization. Well over five thousand bikers of all stripes and colors seized the streets for two hours, fouling up traffic in Manhattan and generally humiliating the police, who have never been able to control Critical Mass in NYC.

As things wound down, the Critical Mass returned to St. Mark's Church, and the cops attacked, targeting random bikers, breaking bones, and arresting anyone who tried to prevent them from doing so. In one telling moment, a few cops walked into the middle of St. Mark's Church and arrested someone, even when they were surrounded by hundreds of protesters who could have stopped them. Still, for the most part the bikers managed to evade this repression and accomplish their goals. It was clear the battle was on, and the NYPD were playing for keeps. Instead of using the high-tech weaponry favored by police at Miami, the



Cyclists invade the City

NYPD were going to rely on old-fashioned clubs, numbers, and beatdowns.

On Sunday, the UFPJ march slowly but surely gathered in the streets. Earlier, when the permit for the rally in Central Park had been denied, there had been rumors that people were going to try to march to Central Park anyway, regardless of what the UFPJ leadership said. While on many levels both possible destinations for the march were merely symbolic goals, marching to Central Park would have placed the march going right through Broadway around the time the Mouse Bloc was to confront the RNC delegates as they attended musicals. The feeling among local anarchists was that a giant Black Bloc at the march would have caused police to single us out for attack—in retrospect that might not have been the case, or even have been a bad thing if it had happened, but at the time anarchists from out of town took this seriously. To provide an alternative, the Don't Just Vote Get Active campaign called for a "Unified Direct Democracy and Direct Action" contingent to deliver "a radical message to what otherwise might be a reformist event." Gathering the Rhythm Workers Union and the Infernal Noise Brigade, the Pagans and the Greens, colorful hippies and black-clad anarcho-punks, pink-clad musicians and radical cheerleaders; this amalgamation grew into one of the largest and most festive contingents in the entire march.

A huge Green Dragon of Self-Determination led the entire contingent, taking up almost an entire block. A small group of people with strange signs urging people to "disassemble the totality of power," holding black umbrellas to hide themselves

from the ever-present cameras filming on the tops of buildings, gathered behind the dragon. Others danced in front of the dragon, and the march seemed to be riding a crest of sheer joy as it approached Madison Square Garden, where the convention was to be held. At this juncture, right in front of the convention center, the sound system of the dragon finally ran out of batteries. In this opening, the Pagans began their inspiring Spiral Dance, and then, as Starhawk of the pagan cluster wrote, she felt "some powerful earth energy, a kind of raw life force that pulsed and thundered and rose up into a great, focused cone of power. Someone told me to look behind, and in the relatively empty space between us and the line of cops at 34th St., the dragon was burning." The Green Dragon had burst into flames. Police retreated behind their barricades, and then gathered forces and began arresting people at random. What appeared to be a spontaneous Black Bloc appeared, defending themselves from the attacking police by throwing bottles as the flames raged behind them.

To this day, no one knows exactly why the Green Dragon went up in smoke. I was dancing relatively near it and have no idea if it was a malfunction, a Pagan spell, an undercover Black Bloc using the Green Dragon as a Trojan Horse, or just some random act of madness. Regardless, in this downright surreal course of events, it became clear to me as the crowd fought back against the police assault that at least some people were bored of marching around aimlessly in circles and wanted to take militant direct action against the powers of

the State. At one point, the cops even retreated from the crowd.

We should be very careful about saying that anything is caused by "police provocateurs," unless there is solid evidence. I remember groups like Ya Basta! floating the same accusations around Genoa against the Black Bloc. It's always easy for protest organizers to call "police provocateurs" those militants who refuse to be corralled into their "organized" plans. While the burning dragon on strictly rational grounds made little sense except as a visceral manifestation of discontent, there was something fitting about a giant bonfire being set only a few yards from the castle of the self-proclaimed rulers of the world. If only the fire was on the inside!

Unfortunately, the march turned dead around instead of forcing its way to Central Park. UFPJ marshals told the marchers to try to make their way to Central Park individually, in what could only feel like an anti-climax. Many anarchists and other angry citizens who weren't already at Broadway went there to participate in the "Chaos on Broadway" and "Mouse Bloc" actions. This is where another phase in direct action began, one that fit almost perfectly the personality of New York City: small groups followed Republican delegates around New York and made their lives a living hell by being as rude as possible to them. On Broadway, I was greeted by an amazing sight: hundreds of protesters gathering in both large clumps and small clusters, undercover cops everywhere but seemingly unable to do anything, hundreds of ordinary tourists wandering about, and the cops generally losing control of the situation. As I

walked out of the subway, I heard a girl scream as she fell, nearly wrapped in this strange orange mesh the cops were using to attempt to corral people, literally knocked off her feet by a cop.

Generally, the rule seemed to be that groups of protesters who were wearing bandannas, holding up anti-Bush banners, or dressing in even more black than is usual in New York City, were targeted by the police and arrested as soon as they attempted to do anything even mildly illegal. The police even arrested the participants in a giant kissing. One can almost hear the officer saying, "We can't have those queers kissing in public, it's a threat to public order!" However, many protesters were dressed for the occasion, easily blending into the constant stream of tourists on Broadway. The cops were unable to arrest everybody, as the Republicans, protesters, and unsuspecting people passing by were mixed together. The protesters appeared as if by magic just where the Republicans were, as the Republicans could be easily identified by their blue tuxedos and red badges, as well as their pasty all-white faces and the gleam of greed and religious fundamentalism in their eyes.

The organizational backbone of the whole event was the text messaging txtmob.org set up the Institute for Applied Autonomy. A network is only as powerful as its communications. Tactical information about the location of the police and the Republican delegates was sent out to hundreds of small groups of protesters, who used the information to gather and disperse

most of them didn't even have security or bodyguards. I walked right up to one of them who looked like John McCain and told him he would wish that the Vietnamese had finished him off after what we Americans were going to do to him because of Iraq. I hope I had the right senator. Regardless, everywhere the delegates went there were both peace signs and fingers in the air, and the promise of "RNC Not Welcome" fulfilled itself, lasting hours until the cops finally managed to arrest several hundred people and the remaining protesters left tired but smiling.

On Monday, the several Poor People's Marches took place. I showed up at the Kensington Welfare Rights March to help a friend of mine manage a large "Boxing Bush" puppet, a life-sized effigy of Bush made especially for people to punch—the perfect puppet for inciting rowdy behavior in a crowd. I noticed a strange dynamic, as white middle-class activists told me to "stop causing trouble" and put our puppet away. While a white liberal told me I was distracting the gathered poor people from listening to yet another speaker, lots of people, especially kids, had a hell of a fun time punching the living daylight out of Bush. I wondered how the previous night's events would have gone had we had some more of these people on the streets with us to hassle the Republicans. When the march finally got going, the true class war began, as police put on their riot gear. The cops were absolutely idiotic and reckless, driving scooters right through the crowd and trying to intimidate people just for marching and of

Coast, I somehow had difficulty imagining most New Yorkers in that meeting. Still, when the day of action on Tuesday actually took place, it was impressive. Using the same text-messaging techniques employed successfully in the Broadway actions, large masses of people attempted to block intersections and hassle delegates, bringing large parts of Manhattan to a standstill. The police responded by arresting as many people as they could, as quickly as possible, with little regard to what they were actually doing or if any laws were being broken. At one point I saw the cops surrounding me and my friends, who had temporarily joined a large group, with the dreaded orange netting. The orange netting was more of a psychological barrier than a physical one: piled up crowds sometimes broke through it. However, most of the crowd I was with didn't even seem to notice that they were about to be mass-arrested. Thinking swiftly, I walked calmly up to a cop, stared him straight in the eye, and said "You are not arresting me. I'm not a protester. Let me go." The Jedi mind trick worked, and the cop meekly opened up the orange netting to let me and my friends out. Reports kept flooding in that people were sitting in the streets blocking traffic, and groups like the True Security Cluster did in fact seize a block occasionally. While the police were arresting people, things were getting out of hand. Some members of my affinity group managed to find themselves face to face with Barbara Bush and George Bush Sr., but the Secret Service arrived before we could effectively confront the former President.



quickly. It was the second coming of smart mobs, a fading trend given new life by a political objective.

One of my friends nearly caused a delegate to choke him in anger by remarking how he would love to engage in homoerotic acts with said delegate. As the delegate removed his chokehold from my friend's neck, my friend calmly stared him in the eyes and told him that "Your entire cock could fit inside my mouth." At that moment, the delegate cracked and just lost it. Further down, a small bloc of anarchists terrified Republicans by blocking them with a black banner and chanting that "Right-wing scum, your time has come!" Definitely not a pleasant night out on the town for the would-be masters of the universe. The arrogance of the Republican delegates was shocking:

for the crime of being poor. At another poor people's march the police claim that an African-American protester gave an undercover a boot in the jaw. Quick point to remember: if the cops claim you assaulted a police officer and your face is on television, do not march around the next day in broad daylight. The police nabbed this man the next day. He's the kind of guy we need to maintain solidarity with, even if he isn't a card-carrying member of Anarchy Inc.

The direct action plans for Tuesday originated as some strange plan for a coordinated primal scream. When I went to one of the planning spokescouncil meetings, they were passing around a flower to denote who was given the floor to speak. While I understand there are cultural differences between the East and West

Meanwhile, one member of the People's Law Collective went outside their office for a smoke break, and was pleasantly shocked to see piles of burning trash along Madison Avenue!

There's a Song Beneath the Concrete

If anything, the RNC protests showed that domestic dissent is alive and well in the United States in the face of the creeping fascism of the Bush regime. This happened against overwhelming odds, and broke a spell of several years of bad luck. It had seemed that the anti-globalization was movement was in retreat since September 11th, unable to adapt its tactics and strategies to the new era of perpetual war.

The large anti-globalization protests seemed to be faltering and the anti-war protests ineffectual, with the harrowing nightmare of Miami was still fresh in many people's minds. In the face of such odds, the RNC protests were a powerful showing of a popular uprising. They stole the media spotlight from the Republicans. The amount of new groups, new faces, and new alliances was overwhelming. Anarchist politics and culture have been kept alive, and a whole new generation is ready to commit their lives to the struggle.

This is a magnificent triumph, since just five years ago at Seattle many anarchists felt purposefully excluded for their "too radical" political beliefs. Not only that, but anarchists are hip! A school-teacher friend of mine ran into kids in Queens who were debating the pros and cons of CrimethInc.'s "Evasion" and "Off the Map." Besides being easily pigeon-holed into the doddering Black Bloc tradition, anarchists of all kinds, from the Radical Reference librarians to the squatters helping out Casa del Sol, were present everywhere. On every level, the direct action movement has shifted toward anarchist decentralized network models of organizing and action. The use of mobile phone technology to communicate tactical information via texting was put to great use. Dressing normally allowed anarchists to infiltrate Republican events.

This was not a pro-Democrat protest: almost everyone I talked to there hated the Republicans but realized that the Democrats did not offer a real alternative. There was almost no pro-Kerry sentiment in evidence,

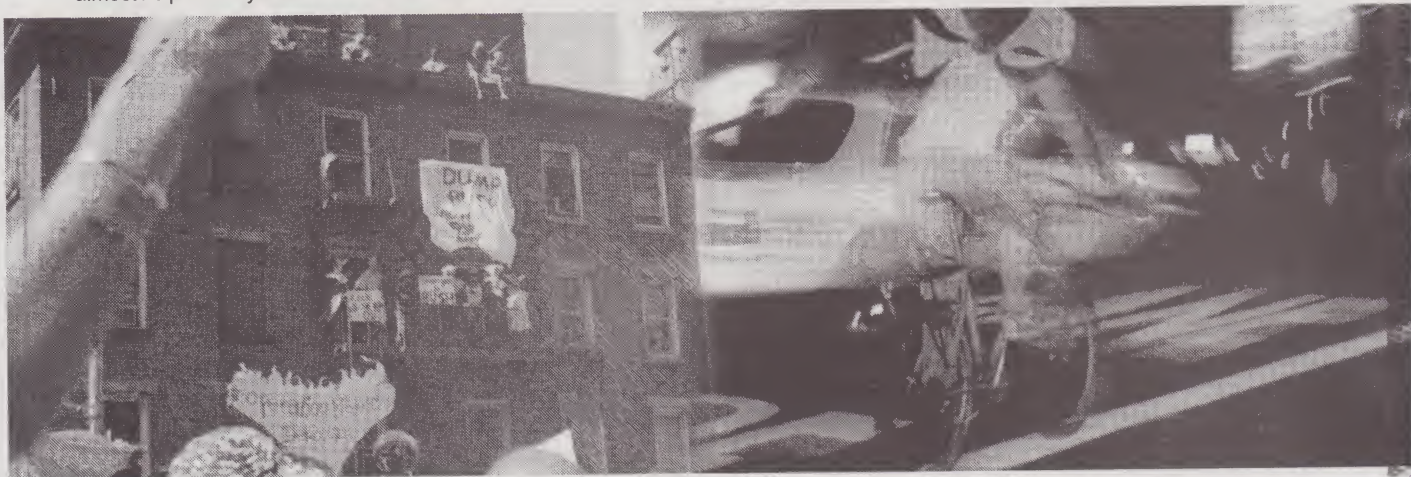
protests, we were in a position to tell UFPJ that they needed to open up their process and operate by a consensus-based spokescouncil; this might even have provoked a coup from within their grassroots membership, which is continually irritated at the sheer lack of backbone of their leadership.

The authoritarian Left is not our friends: if anything, they are holding back the power of people everywhere to take action. We need to stop pandering to union hierarchies and washed-up Marxists. We can provide spaces for people to take as much action as they feel comfortable with, such as the Green, Yellow, and Red Zones did in the Quebec City anti-FTAA protests. We can build alliances with groups that matter like the poor people of the Bronx who fight against the system for survival everyday. Let's not tolerate a conscious return to outdated tactics and organizing, even from those of supposedly "anarchist" backgrounds who backslide into retrograde Leninist and liberal behavior, as Chomsky did in pleading with people to vote for Kerry. Let's keep up the prison support—Banno is still up on trumped-up felony charges for the burning puppet incident, and a movement is only as strong as its prisoner support is.

One more concern is worth voicing—the attrition rate in our community. We anarchists are the most experienced wing of the direct action movement. The generation that gave us Seattle was built up out of nearly a decade of largely unsung valuable work within groups such as Earth First! and Anti-Racist Action—but where is

this system of oppression and despair that they cannot imagine another way of life. We can show it is possible by building gardens in abandoned parking lots, by not letting police brutality go unpunished, by fighting police in the streets whenever their masters come to town. We need to show that the Republicans, the G8, the Empire—call it what you will—doesn't rule the world, but that the power to reshape the world lies in their own hands. It is these demonstrations, in which people realize their own strength and apply it, that keep me inspired and still fighting. The liberals and the remnants of the old Left falsely posit themselves as "representatives" of the people in order to constrain the possible choices and actions of the people. This makes them functionally, if not ideologically, complicit with the forces of the state. We anarchists seek not to represent the people, for we know people can only represent themselves. If someone truly does not want to riot, if they truly want to march around in circles, we respect that choice. But judging from the numbers of people who were interested in taking action at the RNC, there is clear evidence this tendency towards action is back and growing. Even if the RNC protests seemed like only a small step, these are the small steps of an awakening giant.

Where are the mysterious anarchists? You'll find the mythical and dreaded anarchists, both facing off the cops in the streets and building infrastructure, working their fingers to the bone and risking it all for the greatest of stakes: freedom. We're not superheroes, but ordinary people, dirty and



and most protesters claimed that the entire system was bankrupt. More and more people are being drawn to an increasingly radical analysis of capitalism, from MTA workers to veterans back from Iraq. In the words of one paper anarchists distributed at the RNC, "It's not Just Bush, It's the System!"

But why did anarchists let hierarchical groups like UFPJ direct events like the Sunday march from behind closed doors, when it was clear that those were the main body of the protests? Like it or not, if we truly believe that decisions should be open, democratic, and available to all, we can't back down on that stance on the grounds that we need to make some sort of tactical alliance with liberals and crypto-leninists. Since it was anarchists who were doing much if not most of the actual work for the

the Seattle generation now? Far too many experienced anarchists have gone into early retirement, which is both ludicrous and pompous since the situation has only gotten more oppressive since September 11th, not less, and most of the world does not have the luxury to retire to a comfortable life-style of dumpster-diving, gardening, or writing theory. We have to be in the front lines until the day we die or win, spreading our collective knowledge so we can finally have a multi-generational movement of resistance in the United States.

As anarchists, it's not our job to lead by giving commands. We lead by being an inspiring example, and the RNC was an example. We need more heroic examples to show that resistance is possible. The vast majority of people are so caught up within

tired, weary yet still smiling, toiling away at mind-numbing drudgery and acting with unbelievable heroism for the dignity of life. We all have the courage we need within us. We can feel it in our bones and in the soil. As Aresh and the folks working in the community gardens in the Bronx know all too well, the soil is still rich and fertile beneath the concrete skyscrapers of New York. All that is required is that we have the courage to break open the concrete. And in New York, I could almost hear the concrete breaking.

Photos by Elise Gardella. Stolen from Punk Planet #64...

CrimethInc.

I'm not entirely sure how much of an introduction Dennis Lyxzen needs. I mean he was the singer of - arguably - one of the best hardcore bands ever, or at least the vocalist that produced one of the best records (Refused other output is not nearly on par with 'The Shape of Punk to Come') Refused split up, and Dennis joined/formed the (International) Noise Conspiracy, which I suppose he would describe as 'revolutionary rock n roll', whilst others would simply describe it as, 'crap'. Whatever your opinion on T(1)NC there's no doubt that Dennis - as a vocalist and intellectual - has an interesting perspective of punk rock. I've always wanted to talk to him, and managed to wrangle an interview with him in mid-September.

RN: One thing I've found talking to a lot of touring bands, especially political ones, is that they find that on tour they're just acting as consumers, showing up at a venue and not really being able to create anything, or help in the process of setting up the show. Do you ever feel that when you've been touring?

D: Well, I think that everything you do as a political band, and everything from doing interviews, to recording records, to touring, to playing shows; it's a mix of trying to present your political ideas, and your realization that to a certain extent your band is just entertainment. But that's just every aspect of you being a band. I don't think that it's just necessarily when you're on tour. I think that when you do a record, or anything, people can choose what aspect of your band they're really into. And in one way we want to be really entertaining, we don't want to be a travelling manifesto touring the world. We're a rock band that loves to play music, and loves to dance and have a good time, and we combine that with politics. So it's a mix of everything. Some days you get up on stage and you talk about politics and you get a good connection, and people come up to you and talk with you, and people understand what you're saying, and are down with it. But then other days you get up on stage and you talk, and people just look at you and you just have to be like, 'Uhh whatever!' It's a mix.

RN: Do you ever worry that you're just adding to the spectacle, or do you think whatever you're doing you'd be doing that?

D: Yeah. Whatever we do we'd be doing that. There's nothing outside of capitalism. There's nothing outside of this culture that we're living in. That's one of the things with this band. We know about the contradictions of life, the compromises and the inconsistencies that life is. Everyone goes through that, and everybody is a part of that. There's nothing more real than we are, or anyone else who's into politics or into music. That's just the way it is. You always add to the spectacle, and that's just something that you have to accept because there's nothing outside of it. But hopefully

by being here and being loud and being a part of it you can hopefully tweak it, or eventually we can be part of destroying this whole spectacle that we live in.

RN: Do you think then that touring as a band is a good way to communicate ideas?

D: Yeah I think so. I think that's one of the best ways. That's your learning space. That's the space and the place where you can actually meet people, and talk to them, eye to eye, and talk to them and communicate. So of course, that's almost the only way. You can do records and you can put information in the records, and you can have lyrics and liner notes, but you'll never see people responding to those. You might get an email from someone saying, 'That's a cool record', or you might read a good or a bad review but when you're out there playing you interact with people. They feed off your energy and you feed off their energy. You talk to people and actually go out before and after the show and hang out with people. So I think that it's a really important aspect, especially for our band. Up until now we've always made records as kind of an excuse to be able to go out and tour.

RN: Do you take books, or information and stuff with you when you go out on tour or do you just talk?

D: It depends. We try to get in tune with what's going on at that certain time and place, so we can always talk to people about what's happening in their area. We try to - as much as possible - try to bring books, and other information on tour, so that people can check out a little bit more than just us talking about it. We always try and do that. We talk between songs, a little bit here, and a little bit there. It changes each day. Some days you really feel like, 'Right today I really need to talk about this', because there's some political situation that's going on, or there might be a certain vibe at the show which makes you feel like you need to be a loudmouth. And then other days you'll play a squat in Italy in front of 500 anarchists, and you kind of know that (laughs) 'I don't really need to get up and say too much in front of these people, they just want to have a good time.' So it's different from day to day.

RN: Do you ever find that you're preaching to the converted in the punk scene?

D: No. Not really. There are people at the shows who are aware of the situation and then there are people at the shows who are down with what we're talking about. But when it comes down to it there are always a lot of people at our shows that don't agree. Or there's lots of people at our shows who haven't thought about it. Or they're there just because of the music. To think that punk rock is some sort of haven for radical anti-authoritarian ideas, is not really true. A lot of punks are just there because it's 'Punk

Rock' you know? So no, I don't think that we're preaching to the converted. And we've always just been a band who plays good rock music. Even when we play I wouldn't say that the majority of the crowd is made up of punk rockers. It's just people that are into music, or into rock music. I grew up with punk rock listening to music that told me that if you've got something to say, to say it loud. It doesn't matter whether you're right or wrong, just fucking say it. That still lives on with me. If somebody gives me the microphone I'll be loud as hell just because I have the privilege to be.

RN: With The (International) Noise Conspiracy were you deliberately trying to get out of the punk scene then?

D: I think that we did, yeah. Not in the sense that we didn't want to be punk, or that we didn't like punk. It was more in the sense of realising that a lot of the time to be part of the scene, or part of this scene, or that scene, limits you! It limits you as musicians and as people. I'm a punk rocker. I love punk rock. That's my love in life. But also you have to realise that you need to broaden your horizon if you want to play to a lot of people. A lot of times I have a big problem with the fact a lot of political bands or punk rockers are happy just being a big punk band, or a big political punk band. I just want to be a band that plays in front of as many people as possible. And I won't limit myself to a certain scene. When I played in Refused we were really conscious about scenes and it just ended up with us trying to please all these different people instead of just pleasing ourselves. If you don't worry about the audience for the music and the ideas that you put out then I think that they're going to be more honest. If you don't worry about shit, if you don't worry about what the punks will think, or what the rockers will think or whoever will think and just go and do it, then I think that that's a good thing!

RN: Do you think that punk, or punk as a culture is too concerned about what zine you're in or what label you're on?

D: Oh yeah definitely. For sure. I think that the whole record label debate is getting a little bit better. I don't think that that many people care about that anymore. But definitely as a culture that it's definitely too concerned with all the rules, and the things that apply to it. And I think that it's kind of sad. I think that punk rock should be something that... For me it's always been a place where I can express myself and a place where I can do whatever I want. And it's weird to see today. We just did the Warped Tour and it's weird to see how things get so stereotypical. You see all these bands, and no-ones' really doing anything different. I'm not sure that even 2% of those bands classify as punk rock bands though so...! It's weird to see that people are so eager to be part of the scene that they just



You
make
plans
and make history

THE (INTERNATIONAL)

"One form of wage labor may correct the abuses of another,
but no form of wage labor can correct the abuse of wage labor itself."

• Karl Marx

NOISE CONSPIRACY



satisfy other people by sounding the same or looking the same.

RN: Do you not think though that it's things like the Warped Tour and MTV - rather than the people involved in the punk scene itself - that's made it so homogenised?

D: A little bit for sure. It's just always really hard to generalise like that because at the same time you meet people at these things who are genuinely into punk rock music. But at the same time it's always easier to market something if people know what it's going to be like and the MTV generation of new punk rock is definitely the Blink 182 punk rock. It's weird for me because I grew up with the Dead Kennedys, The Clash, Minor Threat, Bad Brains, that sort of punk rock. And it's weird because you see punk getting really narrow, and getting really predictable. And a lot of the punk rock stuff when it first came - especially in America - was very diverse. And I think that's something that people today miss. I think that today - again with the MTV and Warped Tour generation - history is *really* short. For a lot of kids old school punk rock is Green Day. And I mean I don't mind Green Day, I think they're a pretty good band. But they're not really that old school. (laughs) It's just easier to market something if it's youth rebellion-lite, like Blink 182, and bands like that, where they're kind of different, but they're not really different enough. They look kind of different but their views aren't really that different from anyone else. And that's easier to market than a bunch of crazed Swedish anarchists. They don't really know how to respond to that. But at the same time I think that Blink 182 being a popular band, that MTV plays punk rock music, that the Warped Tour is one of the most successful summer tours, shows potential in the fact that there's a lot of bands that feel like they want to be part of something different. And I think that we need to look into, to see if we can use that thing! It's one of those things where you kind of hate the whole of the scene, but if we're not

there to talk about our ideas of punk rock, or our ideas of politics then it's just going to be bands that sound the same. And I think that a lot of these kids that go to see these bands want to be different. And the difference that's being presented now is the Warped Tour. So I think there is some potential in it too. I think that feeling of wanting to be different needs to be nurtured. We can try to be there and tell them about being really different, or really having different ideas.

RN: I mean surely MTV and Warped or whatever would just accommodate to that, in so much as you'd be the one band talk about DIY or politics and stuff, and that'd be your novelty, and would give them some kind of added legitimacy? I mean one band isn't going to make a difference.

D: No, I think of course it's not enough. I mean there are sixty bands on the Warped Tour, and if there's one or two bands talking about this stuff then it's not enough, but you've got to start somewhere. If you want to reach out to people, if you want to reach out to kids. When I was 15 I was an outsider, I felt like a fucking freak. I was lucky enough to get into bands like the Dead Kennedys, and they were bands that actually talked to me about being an outsider. And a lot of these bands on the Warped Tour, and a lot of the bands on MTV talk a lot about being an outsider, but they never ever explain why they're an outsider, why you feel like an outsider, or what you can do to empower yourself as an outsider. The Clash went up on stage and said, 'We're the only band that matters'. And that's kind of what we want to be. We want to be the band that matters today.

RN: [slightly stunned silence] I was reading an old interview that you did the other day where you said that you thought that punk was a subculture for the privileged. Do you still think that's true?

D: Pretty much yeah. I think that when punk rock first came that it was real outsiders. It

was the queers and the misfits and the freaks who were the punks. But now it's a safe youth culture most of the time, which is kind of sad. That doesn't mean that these kids don't feel like real outsiders, it doesn't mean that these kids aren't genuinely trying to be different. But a lot of the times it is a youth culture for the privileged. And it's always funny that the kids that complain the most about us saying the wrong things and being on the wrong label, or selling out, or whatever, are usually the kids that live at home with their parents in a really nice house. (laughs)

RN: Surely though even if they don't have as much life experience as others do they're opinions aren't invalid?

D: I think that their opinions might be valid but you've got to realise that people are at different places at different times. I was a really young and angry kid, and now I'm an older man - I guess (laughs) - and I'm still really angry, but your focus shifts and you tend to look at things that are more important. I think that it's a good thing when people criticise us because it keeps us on our toes. It keeps us thinking about the choices that we make. But a lot of times I've heard the critique for the past ten years. And it's just like - as I said earlier - this is as real as it's going to get. We're all compromising, we're all contradicting ourselves, we're all a part of this fucking mess and we're just trying to work our ways through it. And that's the same thing for everyone. And sometimes it's really easy because if you're in a position of privilege you can have your band, you can go on your DIY tours, you can put out your DIY records, because you live at home. It's a position of privilege that you can use to put yourself on a pedestal. But then one of these days you're going to move away from home and you're going to realise that the economical circumstances of *real* life might be really different. You have to worry about different things, and different aspects of life. But of course everyone's opinion is valid, but

it's just that a lot of the time people don't really think about the big picture before they criticise you!

RN: Another thing that I wanted to ask you about was that it always seems to be you that does the interviews? Are you the spokesman or is that just how it happens?

D: No, actually everyone in this band does interviews. It just happened to be me who was doing it today. Like Inge, our bass player, does a lot of interviews, and had done a bunch this week. So yes, we all do interviews! I think that a lot of people want to talk to me because I'm the singer, and I used to be in another band but now we all do interviews. I think it's an important aspect of our band that we all do interviews, because we're all equally important components of the band!

RN: You try and operate as a collective right?

D: Yeah we do, and I think that we are. While on tour when we do interviews, if we have four of them on the same day we'll just do one each. That's the way that it's set up. Today it just happened to be me.

RN: Do you ever feel that Refused overshadows the (International) Noise Conspiracy?

D: No, not really. I know that a lot of people like Refused and are excited by that. But not really. I think that 'Noise Conspiracy, when

D: Well the DVD is not actually out yet! They're still working on that. All that stuff that came out, was stuff that was already out, and some of that stuff was nice to get out, especially in America. A lot of what started it off was that we put out a release on Victory over there, and we never got paid, ever! They generally just really, really ripped us off, they sold 350,000 copies of that record and never paid us a cent. So what happened was that we arranged that Epitaph would re-release it, and then they re-released everything else at the same time. It was a way of getting closure with that, because it's one of those annoying things where we know that we sold tonnes of record, but never got paid for it. So we re-released it and made sure that now it's been done the way it should have been. Then the DVD is kind of weird because they did interviews with all of us. But at the same time it's a way for all of us in the band to get closure on what it was that happened. Also I think that the other guys in the band [Refused] are getting kind of broke so they needed to get some money (laughs) and I try to be supportive of those guys so...

RN: So are you all still friends then?

D: Yeah, we're super, super good friends. Yeah, David's playing a show tonight and I'm going to go down and watch him play. When I did my solo record David actually produced a couple of the songs, and played on a

from tours with Noise Conspiracy I try to play shows with at home. I just want to play. I mean if you're a musician why not just play music? It's just something that I do as often as I can. I really enjoy it. It gives me a chance to play guitar, and I think that everyone secretly wants to be a guitar player! So it's pretty nice. It's actually a power pop band now - a crappy mix between Elvis Costello and the Ramones. So I've shifted the focus on that one a little. But it's fun. I like it a lot.

RN: Do you play live with that?

D: Yeah, we play a lot of shows where we live. In the city where we live we play all the time actually. Early next year we're going to try and go on a short, week long, tour. It's hard though because Noise Conspiracy is the 'proper job'. If there's ever a choice I always have to choose to do the Noise Conspiracy stuff. But then if I'm home for a week or two we'll practice for a little bit and then go play a party or something. With the Lost Patrol we normally end up playing house parties and stuff like that. It's a good time though. I like it a lot.

RN: I think that's everything I have to ask, unless there's anything else you want to say?

D: Nope, I think I'm done too!

Interview: Edd Pictures: Edd/ stolen (they might be a poor attempt at satire). The

a wealthy man's heart is a ghetto
an anarchist's heart is a kingdom

we started, was kind of creaky because it was 'Dennis from Refused's new band'. But the Noise Conspiracy has been around for almost as long as Refused was around. Noise Conspiracy has been around for six years now, and Refused was around for seven. I think that we definitely stand on our own two feet. We're definitely a very separate entity [to Refused].

RN: Did the fact that the Refused DVD came out annoy you, since you've said on a couple of occasions that nothing else would ever come out from Refused, and then it all got re-released?

couple of others too. So yeah we're still really good friends. We hang out a lot. We had seven years together, and friendships like that are going to last for a lifetime.

RN: What's going on with Lost Patrol [Dennis's solo project]? Is that something that you do just when you get time off, or is it something that takes up an equal amount of time with (I)NC?

D: It used to be really just whenever I had some time off. But lately it's... I recorded a new record. I have a new record recorded, which is going to be coming out - probably - early next year. And I turned it into a proper band. It's just something that when I'm home

(International) Noise Conspiracy just released a new album called 'Armed Love'. It's not very good. But then again I like punk music so maybe I'm not the best judge... I'm sure if you read the NME you'll love it! Lost Patrol, though, is worth checking out. There are two records under that name floating around, both of which Burning Heart put out. On a side note, big thanks to Hayley for sorting this all out for me, despite me doing my best at wrecking it. At least I've now learnt the lesson that if you want to do a phoner interview you should actually show up at the phone!

No Comply

with windmills turning in

No Comply have been a while for a long time now, and it looks like they might just be able to hit the 'big time' i.e. they'll just be able to survive as a constantly touring band. They've also - finally - just released their debut album (*Windmills Turning In Wrong Directions*), which has been pretty well received so I figured it was about time I re-interviewed them. I did this interview with Kelly their singer when the band played the London Garage in September for their record release show!

RN: So how's it all going at the moment?

Kelly: Yeah, really good actually. I'm really stoked cause there are loads of people here, so I'm happy at the moment.

RN: Have you had a good reaction to the album?

K: Yeah brilliant. It's been cool so far and we've had people and magazines taking a bit more notice of us, and doing some features and stuff, so that's good. It's also been cool for people who dug the EP to be able to see the progression to the album, and they seem to like it too. I haven't heard any bad reviews, not that I've seen anyway! (laughs)

RN: Have the tours been getting bigger since the album came out?

K: Yeah. It's hard to tell because we toured after it came out, and that was really brilliant. And then we did a few of the festivals over the summer, like Wasted, Leeds and those kind of things. After that though we went to Europe and we only just got here. But going over to Europe it's like starting in England all over again. Nobody knows who we are and our records aren't really out there, so it's difficult, it's not like here where it's freely available. But Europe was amazing to, with loads of people coming along. We're going back in February. We want to try and get across there three times next year! And then we've got the three dance thing happening, and then it's our 'a mist of fury' tour in November and December. (laughs)

RN: So how did you end up going to Europe?

K: We'd already been on tour out there maybe a year and a half ago when we supported Nerf Herder. But we had a really pessimistic outlook (?). Like for a UK band it's really cool to tour the UK, but it can become stagnant. The UK's such a small country and I don't want to be playing every month in the same town in the country. People just won't go and watch the same band play ten times a year. It's just not going to happen. Not only that we want to play to different people. There's other people who are also going to listen to our album, and be interested in our album. We want to visit different countries and hopefully get people

coming to see us there. We just want to see these different countries, because the scene is so different from area to area, and we just want to experience as much as possible!

RN: Do you find that you are playing the same venues over and over again?

K: We were but like I say we're trying to branch out more.

RN: Are you considering touring less?

K: No we don't want to tour less, we just want to spread ourselves out more. So we'll try and do Europe three times next year. We want to try and make it out to America next year, and hopefully Japan and South Africa, to try and get to as many different places as possible. Not only that, I think that if you're away from the UK, that when you come back you're a little bit more appreciated. You're not just a UK band doing 200 gigs in the UK.

RN: Have you found the UK scene is constrictive at all at letting bands become bigger? Has anyone commented negatively on you trying to get bigger?

K: Not really. I don't know. I try not let stuff bother me too much. But probably some people have said stuff like that. I mean I feel terrible talking bad about the UK scene because I think that it's amazing. I think the scene's amazing. I think there are so many cool bands. I think there are so many cool promoters. Everybody gets along. I sometimes feel at the same time though that there's a small minority of people end up thinking that they own the band because the band is from the UK. So they end up treating them differently than they would say if it was a European or American band. 'Oh they should do this, they shouldn't do this.' Well it's not really up to them, it's up to the band to make themselves happy and see what they feel is right. They shouldn't do what someone who isn't in the band thinks they should do. But as I say that's a small minority of people. Generally the kids in the UK scene are really enthusiastic and just generally great! And at the same time when we go to Europe the scene's different there, but it's still great, everywhere has it's own merits.

RN: Do you think that the scene's improved over the past couple of years? It seems it's more supportive now.

K: Yeah I think definitely. I think that it's down to how hard band, labels and promoters have worked, so more people have taken notice, rather than previously maybe those same people would have ignored them. So, yeah I definitely think it's improved. There are a lot of bands who are

really hardworking, a lot of people, and zines who are hardworking.

RN: I was reading the lyrics the other day, and I was just wondering what you'd hope people would take away from the lyrics after listening to them?

K: I don't know really. In a way I hope that the lyrics are a little bit cryptic because I don't want everyone to totally get the gist of what I'm trying to say. That might seem strange, but I like it when you kind of make up your own mind about what someone's singing about. You might be wrong, but it's always so much cooler that way. In some ways people should look at what I say and digest it, but in another way I hope that they could have another take on what I'm trying to say.

RN: How do you write the lyrics? Is it after the music has happened?

K: Yeah. I've tried writing it before, but it always ends up like you're trying to fit too many words in so for me I find the easiest way to write is to write as we're writing the music. They'll start writing the verse and I'll start writing the verse, and when it moves onto the chorus I'll do the same! I don't like to wait for the whole long to be finished and then add my lyrics, I like to do write it at the same time as everyone else because that's when we're most creative.

RN: Do you guys crossover then in terms of do you have influence over the music and you have influence over the lyrics?

K: Yeah, a little bit. I'll sing something and Jon or someone will say, 'No I don't really think that works there'. Or they'll play something and I'll say that I thought it would work somewhere else. Yeah we definitely integrate. We don't write other people's parts for them though, we don't really like that idea.

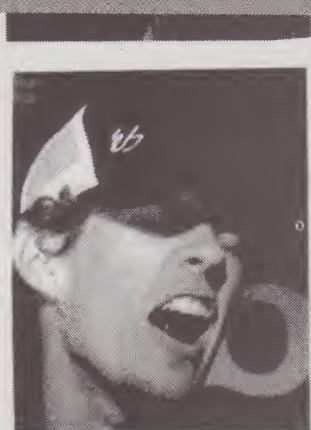
RN: So do you come to the practice room with ideas or is it all done there?

K: The songs aren't all thought out before we come to a practice room, but maybe someone will have the verse or the chorus to a song. And then we'll jam it out. Mess around with it and build a song around it.

RN: Do you ever manage to write stuff on tour?

K: No, that's so difficult! (laughs) I envy any band that can write on tour, because it's the hardest thing for us. The concentration just isn't there because you're tired. If you're doing a sound check you don't really want to write a song you know! But it's definitely best for us to go home and write, that's definitely what works for us. I'd love to be one of those bands that can write on tour though. We're thinking of getting a little 16 track, 6 store, studio thing that we can take

wrong directions



on tour with us so we can at least try and get things written whilst on the road.

RN: A few bands I've spoken to about this say that you can sometimes end up on autopilot on tour, that each day is the same. Do you ever find that?

K: No, I don't find that. I was talking to the band sort of about this the other night. Because one thing that does tend to stay the same is setting up and stuff, and so you try and do it as quickly as possible and you do just do it on auto. But then sometimes when you're actually playing you find yourself doing the same thing. Like at one point you might decide that it's really cool to do a little kick, and then the next night you might find yourself doing the same thing. And you just think, 'Oh my god, no my dancing is becoming choreographed' and so you have to mentally try really hard not to do it again! I'm always trying to stay clear of that. It's just something that can really easily happen, and I was talking to the other bands today and they were all just like, 'Yeah, totally!' (laughs)

RN: What's the plan for the band then, is it to become a full time band?

K: It's pretty much full time. Sometimes we go home and we work and stuff. But I really want it to be full time. It's what I love to do, and enjoy the most! (laughs) It's what I'd love to do, but at the moment we don't earn enough money to do that. But it wouldn't change anything, except not having to go home and having to work. Knowing that I'm going back out on tour soon is the only thing that keeps me going when I'm back home.

RN: Do you enjoy going home?

K: For two days it's cool. But then after that it's like, 'I hate this place!' Plymouth's a really great place to live, it's just going into town, doing the same jobs, meeting the same people, seeing the same people at the club, the same music being played. It's horrible. I don't go out at night in Plymouth at all anymore. I go to work, and I go to the cinema - I'm really boring. But I don't go to the cinema and I don't go clubbing. But for two days you're like, 'Wow, I love this place, it's so great to be home', then after two days that feeling disappears.

RN: Have you lived down there all your life?

K: Yeah. I was born in Middlesbrough, but I was a baby when we moved down there. I've been there all my life. But most of the people that I went to school with, and who I was friends with have moved to different towns, but it's cool! If I had to settle down somewhere it'd be Plymouth cause it's quiet, relaxed and it's by the sea. It's a really cool place to live. But the frame of mind that I'm in at the moment means that I just want to travel and explore as much as possible. So going back there for any length of time is frustrating for me at the moment.

RN: Has it got a reasonably supportive scene when you were a smaller band?

K: Oh definitely. It's cool. And the other bands and promoters that are down there are so wicked. When we were first a band we'd always get put on as a support for the touring bands. And as we've grown as a band the scene's changed a little bit. There's now a new venue called The Phoenix where they have gigs four or five times a week. And they have some really talented musicians play there. So it's cool because at first everyone had the attitude of, 'OK well we're in Plymouth, we're in the middle of nowhere, so let's not bother to tour because everywhere is hours away'. And then some bands started to do it, and so more bands thought, 'Well OK so this band, and this band, and this band have all managed to go on a UK tour, OK we'll go too!' There's more enthusiasm for that sort of thing now!

RN: It does take you like three hours to get anywhere. I mean it's two hours to Bristol right?

K: Yeah an hour and a half if we max it. But generally two hours at least.

RN: So touring is the only real option then?

K: Touring's definitely better. But tonight is a one off show. It took us four or five hours to get here, and it'll take four hours to get home.

RN: That's not too bad.

K: You do get used to it. You get used to going home and getting in at five in the morning and then getting up for work the next day. You just get into the swing of it.

RN: Do you guys all get along as a band?

K: Yeah we all get along. But boredom sometimes kicks in. On the European tour we had some really long drives, and on the final few days I was so sick of being in that

van. But I'm lucky because I don't even drive, so the guys who were driving were probably more pissed off than me. But we weren't arguing with each other, it was just a silent discontent of being sat in the van. You're like, 'I'm really going to go crazy if I'm stuck in this van for another hour because I have nothing to do'. The worst bit though is the A38 from Plymouth to Exeter, and then maybe the M5 from Exeter to Bristol because that's the road that we always have to do. If we're playing Southampton or Portsmouth, or somewhere else on the South Coast then we just have to go to Exeter. But even that is so boring. We must have travelled up the A38 so many times. We even know where the roadkill is on the road because they never move it. 'Oh yeah dead badger coming up on your left!' (laughs) It's really bad. It's worse being vegan sitting there thinking about all this road kill that cars have produced, and should you really be travelling in a van. Luckily we haven't really ever hit anything with the van. Like we once bumped a deer, and I was really upset, but it seemed to be OK cause it got up and ran off. I think it was OK because we were going really slow. But it's so horrible.

RN: Do you find it difficult being vegan on tour?

K: Not really, so long as people know they'll make sure there isn't anything that I can't eat. The worst thing about it though is that chips are vegan so inevitably when we have a buyout [where the promoter gives the band money to buy food rather than actually doing it him/herself] we inevitably go out and get chips. You can get falafel I suppose.

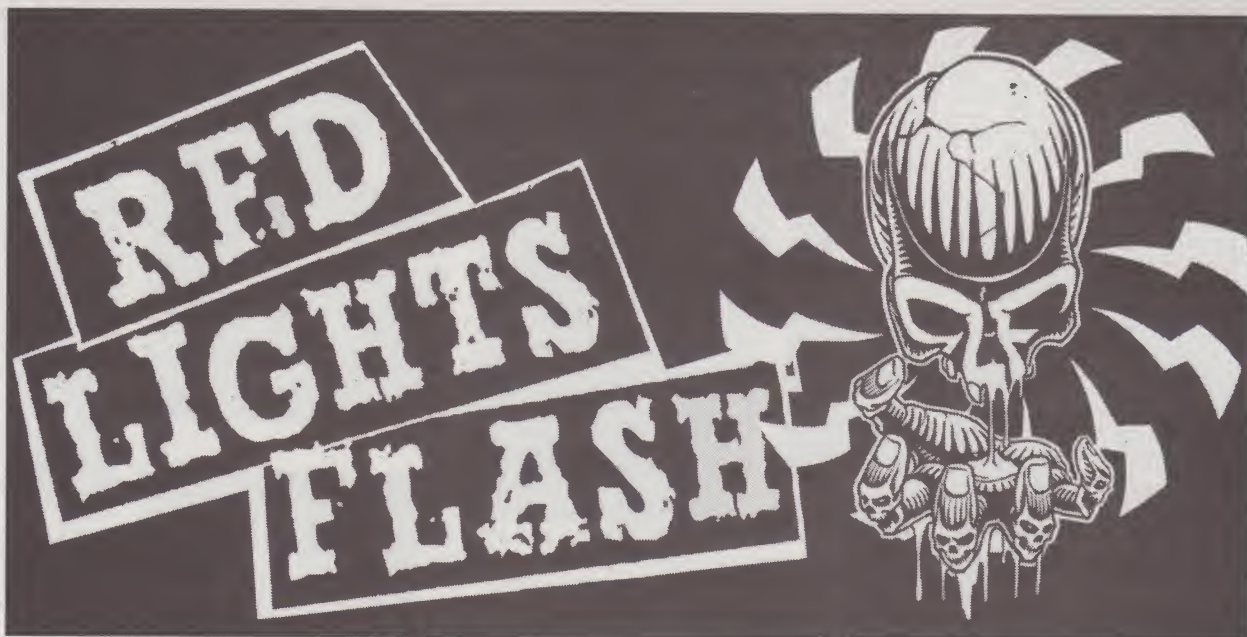
RN: Yeah but that's almost as bad as chips!

K: You can get pizza without the cheese too.

RN: I've never actually had that.

K: Oh yeah that's a core vegan touring diet. If we go past a supermarket I try and get healthy things but we don't often have time to do that.

Interview: Edd. Thanks to Kelly for humouring me, and finding time to talk to me in her busy evening. You can get their album through Deck Cheese Records.



I can't think of a more underrated band than Red Lights Flash from Austria. They play a combination of intelligent political hardcore and technical punk rock, crossing genres and provoking thought from even the most closed mind. On their October 2004 tour with Pipedown, I caught up with the boys to chat about A-F Records, Outkast and alcohol. (Transcribing an interview with 3 people called Chris proved to be a nightmare) Here goes...

Christoph- So, did you bring your own answers for this interview?

Chris12oh5- Well, I'm just going to make stuff up if you don't give me good answers. So, anyway, for the record, who are you and what do you do?

(Silence)

Chris12oh5- You have to answer that.

Christoph- How is your life in Leeds? I want to interview you! Ok, I am Christoph and I play guitar and vocals.

Christian- I am Christian doing the vocals and the guitar.

Consti- I don't want to speak.

Christian- This is Consti and he plays the drums.

Christoph- This is Werner, he plays the bass and sings.

Chris12oh5- So, how's the tour going so far?

Christian- So far very good, we've been to many countries... Like... Austria

Chris12oh5- So far from home!

Christian- Yeah, it's been two and half weeks and we've been to lots of great cities, experienced new cultures. It's good.

Chris12oh5- I think most people want to know how the relationship with A-F Records came about.

Christian- It started last year when we did support for Anti Flag in Austria. They seemed to like the music, we exchanged CDs, a month later we received an email and they asked us if we wanted to do the support for the whole tour. This seemed like a great chanced for us, so we went on this tour and it was really good and on the tour they asked us if we want to sign to A-F Records.

Chris12oh5- So, there's no hard feelings with Householdname Records?

Christian- Oh no, We asked them if we could do it and thought maybe it could be on A-F Records in America and Householdname in Europe, then we started to record and we had finished the recording in February and we spoke to all the people at both labels and the best solution seemed to be to do it on A-F Records fully because they give us good promotion and a good booking agency whereas Householdname is more concentrated in the UK. They are still good friends of ours, it was good times... But now we have good people working for us also in Austria and Germany which is very important for us.

Chris12oh5- Are you spending a lot of time away from home these days then?

Christoph- Right now?! Yeah!

Chris12oh5- Doh! That's not what I mean. I meant do you have plans to go to America?

Christian- Yeah there are plans.

Chris12oh5- Um... Elaborate? When?

Consti- Shhhhhh!

Chris12oh5- Oh sorry!

Christian- Umm... Spring 2005?

Chris12oh5- Hopefully or definitely?

Christian- I think I will believe it when I am sitting on the plane.

Chris12oh5- How expensive is it for European bands to go on tour in America? Are you going to lose a lot of your own money?

Christoph- It depends with which band you are touring. If it is with a big band, then they will cover your costs. If you go out with a smaller band, then it becomes more of a problem to sort out the flights, so it really depends.

Christian- To be honest, we don't care. It's just a good opportunity for us to go to a different continent and play.

Christoph- So we will fucking do it..

Chris12oh5- Is your record already out there?

Christian- It's been out since 3 weeks.

Christoph- But we already sold 2 million records.

Chris12oh5- Wow, that's good going guys... Bon Jovi!

Christoph- Yeah, they are going to be supporting us on the forthcoming tour. Hopefully we can cover their costs.

Chris12oh5- So are you happy with the way the new record turned out?

Christoph and Christian- Yeah!

Chris12oh5- I've heard really good feedback. The only negative criticism I heard about it was that it comes across a little over produced... Do you agree?

Christoph- No...

(Chris12oh5- Laughing... No one else is)

Christoph- I think it's the best record we did so far. It's the first time where you can hear every single instrument and the voices are better produced. We did our best in the studio, but I think we could still do a bit better, but I definitely don't think it's over produced.

Chris12oh5- I don't really think so either, but I've been talking to a lot of people since it came out and that's the only negative thing I've heard, so that's got to be an achievement! Who did the artwork, by the way?

Werner- Me!

Christoph- Werner our silent bass player did it. He's quite a quiet guy.

Werner- Yes I did!

Chris12oh5- Do you do artwork for other bands, or was this your first attempt?

Werner- I've had no opportunity to work for other bands so far, it was just some flyers I made for local shows. So far as cover artwork goes, it stays within our band.

Chris12oh5- When I was in Graz I saw the flyer for the show you were doing with local people on guest vocals. How did it turn out?

Christian- It went really well. We didn't know what to do because we had played our home town about 30 times. We wanted to do something special, so we booked a completely different venue which was really big and we just didn't know if the people were going to come there, the drinks are quite expensive and it's really big. But then 600 people showed up, we had to turn away



100 people. The cover songs were really difficult because we had no time to rehearse all the songs with different vocalists. But somehow it worked out really fine in the end. Christoph- The way the cover songs worked is that we played them all at the end of the set and the audience had to vote who was the best singer. Georg from Antimaniac won...

Chris12oh5- Of course he did!...

Christoph- ...because he did Outkast. He was dressed exactly like him and had practiced a lot...he really looked like him! So, we won.

Chris12oh5- Was there any backlash from having to turn people away?

Christian- Yeah a little bit. We never expected so many people to come because Graz is still a very small town and there are normally there are rock shows for maybe 400 people and the local band will draw 200-300 maximum. Nobody expected that. But I don't think anyone can blame us for that because we booked such a large venue. If we did it in a small place for 100 people then Ok...

Christoph- There were some people there under the age of 16. We knew before that this might be a problem. So before the show I went out and there were these 3 guys who had been driving one hour to get to the show, but they were 15, so I asked to the security...I told them that I worked in the youth centre where they were (it was a lie!)...

Christian- Yeah, we were also putting people on the guest list we don't even know. Making up fake names just so we could get more people.

Chris12oh5- Hah, yeah it seems like a no win situation some times. I was talking to one of the guys from Captain Everything and he was saying that they have the same problem when they play their home town, Watford. The venue is never big enough. Christian- This has got to be the best problem a band can have though!

Chris12oh5- Yeah, but it is still kinda sad because you get all these stupid people on message boards complaining. Idiots who have nothing better to do than sit online and whine.

Werner- That is the exact reason we don't have a message board.

Chris12oh5- I'm convinced these people don't actually come out to shows anyway. They'd rather sit a computer and stir shit. Anyway, they way that I understood your new record, it seemed like the most political one that you have done. Just in terms of the ideas behind the music. Do you think that as you become bigger this message will become diluted? Or do you still believe in everything that you believed when you wrote your first song?

Christian- I actually feel like the second album is more political. I think the new one offers more directions for people to think about when they read the lyrics... To think about how to interpret the songs. But year, there are some very political songs on the new record, you are right.

Christoph- Especially the song 'Politics of Hate'. We wrote this for a friend of ours from Sudan and he tried to make a new life for himself in Austria, but because of the political system he has been living for 6 years without the chance of getting a job. We tried to give him a platform, so for that song 'Politics of Hate', he is speaking and that was really important because we want people to understand from our lyrics what is happening in our country. We don't want to write a lyric about George Bush like thousands of other bands.

Chris12oh5- I think this is what my problem with a band like AntiFlag is. It's kinda basic, it doesn't require a lot of thought to understand it. I suppose there is the argument that if you listen to Anti Flag it could lead you onto something like you guys, or Strike Anywhere, so it is a valid argument.

Christoph- I don't know. I feel like it's just a different concept. Anti Flag are good friends of ours and I know the people stand behind everything they are doing. Plus, they reach a lot of young people. A lot of young people will get to political issues through music, I think this is what Rage Against the Machine did. To attract a lot of people you need phrases. I don't know if it's bad or not. For me, it's not bad. Sometimes when a band gets big people will mock them...

Chris12oh5- I don't think that it's a bad thing. I just think it's good that you are doing something different, but you're on the same label as a band like Anti Flag. So you could get a 15 year old hearing a song about George Bush but then he can hear about the civil rights of Sudanese people in Austria, which is much more unexplored territory.

Christian- To be honest, it wouldn't make a lot of sense to have an Austrian band sing about George Bush anyway! Noone could take that seriously!

Christoph- But on the new record there is a lot of stuff about personal feelings. It depends on what person writes the lyric. Werner writes a lot of personal stuff and Christian writes a lot of political stuff. Myself, when I'm not drunken, writes some lyrics down.

Werner- Rip off!

Chris12oh5- How is the drinking going on tour, by the way?

Christoph- Not good in England. We don't get very much free beer here!

Chris12oh5- Well, I apologise on behalf of England.

Christoph- All the promoters- Please change that! Haha.

Chris12oh5- Ok, I think that is everything that I need to know. Thanks guys.

RLF- Thanks Chris.

Interview: Chris. Red Lights Flash just put out their new record on A-F Records, their debut is on Household Name Records.

10 THINGS THAT WE WISH YOU'D ASK ABOUT ANIMAL RIGHTS

1. What do you mean by 'animal rights', and which 'rights' exactly are you referring to? The main claim of the animal rights movement is one so simple and logical that, in principle, it is hard to find someone who would oppose it. We believe that any living creature capable of suffering and possessing a natural longing & need for freedom deserves the most basic, self-evident birthrights: meaning, that his life and liberty shall not be taken from it, and that no suffering will be deliberately inflicted upon it. These are all such obvious rights that all of us -or at least the vast majority of us -take them for granted today when it comes to ourselves and to human beings in general. And yet we do not manage to truthfully recognize or respect them in any other living creature except ourselves. The animal rights movement sees this as an injustice, one that stems from ignorance and/or selfishness -the very same causes which in the not-so- distant past prevented us as a society from recognizing and respecting the similar natural rights of black people and women, among others.

2. Where do you draw the line? Don't plants have rights too?

When we speak of "animal rights", we are of course working within the assumption that there is a clear, universally accepted line separating animal life from plant life.

The most relevant difference between the two is naturally the fact that plants do not have neither nervous systems (as well as brains), and are therefore not capable of experiencing pain (the feeling of pain is understood to be a self-defense mechanism: when we come in contact with something dangerous, pain steps in and teaches us to avoid it in the future. Plants can never move nor avoid things, hence they would have no need for such a mechanism).

Given the fact that it is therefore possible to obtain our food from bushes, plants and trees without causing them "pain", and sometimes even without killing or harming them, it seems most logical (from an ethical point of view, but also from ecological and health viewpoints) to base our lives on vegetarian diets instead of on food that unquestionably inflicts pain and death.

Furthermore, even if we were to take plants' "pain" and "right to live" into consideration, keeping a strict vegetarian diet would still be preferable, because feeding immense quantities of plants to fatten up animals and then eating those animals inflicts considerably more destruction and death for both plants and animals.

3. How can you object to the use of animals when it is something that man has done since the beginning of time?

Until about 150 years ago, the institution of slavery had accompanied mankind since the dawn of time as a phenomenon no less natural than eating or using other animals. The belief that women are inferior to men was too, until less than a hundred years ago, a solid cornerstone of human thought. Those who challenged these norms in the past were considered (much like animal rights activists are considered today) "extremist" and ridiculous people, who object to the very natural order of things in the world. However, humanity evolves, as well as its' ethics, and most of us are gradually reaching an understanding of the fact that if a certain idea or custom dates back to ancient times, this is not necessarily a testament to its' righteousness or validity. Indeed, one could argue that the exact opposite is more correct...

4. You can live however you see fit, but what give you the right to preach and tell others what to do and not to do?

Anyone can believe that animals were created to spend their entire lives in crowded cages, just like they can believe minorities exist solely to be slaves or homosexuality should be punished by death. However, a person's right to believe whatever he or she wants does not necessarily entitle him or her the right to act on these beliefs.

Non-human animals' right to live, to be free and escape deliberate suffering is not a matter of "opinion" or "personal choice" from our part, just like our own right to live, be free and avoid deliberate suffering is not dependant on the "opinions" and "personal choices" of those around us. Similarly to our attitude towards humans, our freedoms regarding non-human animals should end where their own freedom begins.

By its' very nature, every advancement in the social arena occurs thanks to people who "preach" and "tell others what to do and not to do": not to enslave others, not to force children to work, not to sexually harass women etc. And all the protest movements that have voiced these aforementioned "demands" were originally met -much like the animal rights movement -with a hostile resistance from those who wished to preserve their "right" to continue committing these wrongs.

5. What is the difference between animal welfare and animal rights organizations? Animal welfare organizations acknowledge the suffering of animals and work to minimize it through a call to more "humane" methods of exploitation, but unlike us their official goal as a movement is not the complete abolition of the exploitation and killing of non-human animals.

While animal welfare organizations acknowledge that animals do have rights, they are still based in the belief that said rights can and should be bent or broken whenever there is sufficient benefit in it for human beings.

For example, animal welfare organizations might be deeply concerned that cows are not getting enough room or suitable food in factory farms, but they will not take an official stance against their very confinement and slaughter, regardless of the conditions in which these are committed.

6. Do you really believe that my suffering, and my families' suffering, are not more important than that of a frog or a mouse? As human beings, it is only natural that the suffering of our own biological species would move us more than that of other species; it is easier for us to identify with it and put ourselves in place of the victim when it is a fellow Homo Sapiens.

However this is by no means a moral or logical stance, but a purely emotional one. Likewise, the suffering of our friends and relatives touches each and every one of us more than the suffering of complete strangers, and yet no one would seriously suggest that the suffering of people he knows is of more "significance" or "worth",

morally speaking, than that of those he has never met.

It is our belief that all living beings deserve an equal consideration of their right to live and to avoid suffering, for the simple reason that there is simply no unbiased, truly objective and convincing standard for determining that human suffering matters more than that of non-human animals.

As far as intellect is concerned, we might be more developed, but almost all other animals are more developed than us in one or more different areas. The crucial question is not their size, mental development or number of legs, but their ability to suffer and their natural desire for a free life - and in that respect animals are without a doubt our equals.

7. Why do you deal with the suffering of animals when there are so many people who suffer and need help?

As a movement whose very existence is founded on a belief that suffering is suffering no matter who is at the receiving end, the animal rights movement simply cannot remain indifferent on issues of human suffering.

As individuals, some of us have chosen to act for non-human animals because this issue is closest to our hearts and is therefore the one in which we'd be the most effective; others have chosen it because contrary to the oppressed human populations and sectors, animals cannot voice their plight by themselves (at least not in our languages); and some of us do so for the simple reason that animals are the most oppressed group, both in terms of numbers of individuals oppressed and the brutal nature of the exploitation itself.

However, speaking from an acquaintance going back many years with both the Israeli and international animal rights movement, we are able to say without hesitation that it is mostly composed of people who resent the suffering of all, and object to injustice and exploitation in all cases, human or non-human.

The false stereotype according to which people who care about animals don't care about human beings is nothing more than the last refuge of those who simply wish to remain indifferent to the misery that their lifestyles cause others.

8. You might be wealthy enough to afford the alternatives, but what about the millions of hungry people in poor countries who need meat?

Ethical considerations aside, this question misses the factual and essential link between world hunger and the meat industry: as long as food production in most of the world is based on animal products, there will simply never be enough food for all of earth's inhabitants.

The meat industry wastes much more food than it produces: about a third of

the world's grain is diverted to the fattening of animals, but only a small amount of the food these animals consume is turned into the kind of flesh humans eat. The most efficient and effective use of lands and crops is without question growing food directly for humans, and not fattening up animals and eating their flesh later on.

Apart from thoughtless, short-sighted, inefficient and selfish management of lands and crops, the meat industry is also responsible for wasting more water than any other industry, and plays a major role in deforestation, water contamination, global warming and more.

9. Do you really expect or demand that all of us turn into activists for animal rights?

No. We understand that people should spend their energy campaigning for the issues on which they feel most passionate about, and (unfortunately) there are numerous issues in which it is urgently necessary and strongly recommended to work for a better world.

Having said that, there is a lot of important and meaningful things which we can do in our daily lives to alleviate the suffering of animals without turning into "activists" and without sacrificing our time or energy.

Meals composed purely of vegetarian food, for example, do not require more time (or money) than eating body parts of dead animals, and today it is also widely known that this is even better to our health. Also, purchasing only products with the label "not tested on animals" is no more expensive or difficult than purchasing the one which are still cruelly tested on millions of animals every single day. And these are just two good examples.

We wholly understand that it is currently impossible to abstain completely from contributing our money to industries which cause suffering (to both human and non-human animals), but we simply feel there is just no real reason we shouldn't try our best to do so.

10. Where can I find more information on animal rights?

Animal rights is a wider, more complex subject than can be described in a short flyer such as this one, which of course cannot answer all the various questions and touch on all the different aspects. That is why we encourage you to read and search further into this area.

BOOKS:

"Animal Liberation", Peter Singer (Cr-Am, 1998)

"Slaughter of the Innocent", Hans Ruesch (Kineret, 1991)

Originally printed in Hebrew by Onestruggle.net



Jerry Vlasak

a nice scientist!



The name Jerry Vlasak may be familiar to some of the people who pay particular attention to the media Spectacle or are animal liberation activists, others though are no doubt less familiar. Jerry was shot to 'fame' at the start of August when he would not retract a statement saying essentially that killing five scientists who were vivisectioners would be justified because of the number of animal lives that it would save. This subsequently led to him being banned from entering the country and being portrayed in the media as some 'leader' for animal extremist terrorists. Personally I strongly disagree with Jerry's opinions on murder, since - from a philosophical and moral point of view - I consider it to be wrong to consider any animal (including humans) as a means to an end. It should also be noted that the animal rights movement - though partakes regularly in violence against property - has never actually physically injured/ murdered any animal or non-animal (as far as we're able to judge). All the same Vlasak has some interesting opinions, and an interesting perspective on the issues surrounding vivisection, since he was once one himself.

RN: You were at one point a vivisectioner yourself. How did you become involved in animal research in the first place, and what subsequently made you so opposed to it?

Jerry: I did little or no animal experimentation throughout college or medical school; it just never came up. The majority of US medical schools no longer use animals to teach students. Then in my 6-year surgical residency, I was asked to spend a year doing research, and went into a laboratory using animals at my request,

because the main researcher was a mentor of mine at the time. I experimented on dogs and rabbits, killing dozens over the course of a year.

RN: Is your opposition to vivisection simply based upon science, or do you have a moral opposition to it as well (the idea that humans don't have a right to exploit animals for their own ends)?

Jerry: My opposition to vivisection is completely based on ethics; it just turns out the science supports these views in most cases. There is no doubt that some research on animals has been useful for human health issues, and will probably continue to be. The vast majority of data gathered on animals, is however, discarded, making it a horribly inefficient, as well as cruel manner of investigation. Hundreds of millions of scarce research dollars are wasted on animal research, while worthwhile projects go unfunded. And by the way, there would have been, and will be, other ways to discover what is discovered by using animals. Meanwhile, most people die of entirely preventable diseases that could be cured by allowing them access to clean water, teaching them about healthy food and lifestyles, and removing toxins from their environment.

RN: What do your colleagues and superiors at your hospital make of your personal convictions? Does it cause problems at work? Why do you think it is that so few doctors/ scientists publicly oppose vivisection?

Jerry: Most doctors I know pay no heed to animal studies and research; they know it does not affect their practice or their care of patients. I generally stay under the radar at work; it allows me to practice my profession, earn the money I need, and gives me the time to travel and speak out against various issues I feel strongly about. Most physicians don't speak out because, like most people that eat meat and go to circuses, they are ignorant to the surrounding facts and issues.

RN: Are you/ were you concerned that some of your comments may have prejudiced people against the animal rights movement? Do you think that gaining the support of public opinion is of great importance?

Jerry: I care little for public support. I do not think the majority of the public will ever make decisions based on compassion and empathy for other beings. Most humans care only about themselves and their immediate family and friends, and I don't see that changing anytime soon. Different tactics are effective in different areas for getting humans to stop hurting animals, and we should advocate and use whatever works in any particular area. Media can be useful at times, but I would never advocate pandering to them or doing stunts to get their attention.

RN: Is it not a bad idea to consider any animal as simply a means to an end? e.g. the condoning the murder of a small number of vivisectioners because they would have a beneficial net effect should is surely a similar mind set as killing hundreds of animals to save a number of humans?

Jerry: The point you leave out is that killing innocent animals to save humans is an unethical position, just like killing Jews in concentration camps in medical experiments (many which were very informative and useful for humans). Vivisectioners, on the other hand, are not innocent; they are immoral murderers of the innocent, and if they will not reform when asked, they deserve to be stopped using whatever means necessary. If someone was molesting your child or raping your wife, you would do what it took to stop them. You



would likely not be too concerned with their emotional well-being.

Activists have fought vivisection for well over a hundred years. How long do we have to bang our heads against the same wall before we realize our current tactics are working? When will we start to look for and use tactics that have been shown to be successful in other liberation movements, like against Apartheid in South Africa, against slavery here in the US, against oppressive regimes in places like Algeria, Vietnam, and the current occupations of Palestine and Iraq?

RN: As vegans we accept that humans are no more important than other animals. Do you think most people will ever be able to absorb this idea?

Jerry: No. The majority of humans are arrogant and anthropocentric, and always will be.

RN: Do you hold any political convictions beyond animal rights? It seems that in this country, and Europe generally, that most who are militantly opposed to animal abuse are also anarchists?

Jerry: Anarchism holds a certain appeal, and I like the views of Noam Chomsky and others like him in this regards. That said, I don't see it happening in this society; there are too many people with too much power and money to lose to let it happen. Ultimately, this human society will be crushed under its own weight, and I think we are biding our time, helping those that we can, until this happens. Hopefully, it will be in the next few decades, but it could be longer.

RN: Is there a difference between the movement in this country and in the USA?

Jerry: Activists in the UK seem to be less concerned with material wealth, perhaps because it is harder to come by there. Therefore, they are more willing to risk their freedom and comfort to fight for the animals. If it were ones family or friends being tortured to death in laboratories or on factory farms, wouldn't one be acting a bit differently? Perhaps be willing to use more sabotage, destroy more property of the abusers, and use other means to free their loved ones? It is only the still-persistent speciesism that allows people to spend their time fighting for animals writing letters, holding protest signs, and asking for legislative changes while millions die horrible deaths at the hands of the abusers. As Rodney Coronado says, "They seek crumbs from the master's table".

RN: Do you have any hobbies, or is too much of your time taken up to have any? I suppose connected to that what music are you into (I gotta ask - it is a punk fanzine after all!)?

Jerry: Hobbies include travelling and hiking in the wilderness when I get the chance, and spending valuable time with my wife Pamelyn and the 6 rescued dogs we share our lives with. As for music, I prefer music from those rebellious 60's and early 70's, though I have been known to visit the occasional hardcore club with friends.

Interview: Animal Liberation is Human Liberation. Image: Chronic Fatigue. Cheers to Jerry for getting the interview back to me.



Beef Cattle: The lucky ones are put out to graze, before being killed at about two years old. Increasingly though, the cost cutting pushed by supermarkets is forming an incentive to intensify production. Intensively reared cows are snatched from their mother within 48 hours, castrated, have their horns burnt out and are packed into sheds, in which they find it difficult to move. This is to prevent them 'wasting' energy which could otherwise turn to bulk. The worst of such sheds might contain 8,000 animals and have slatted floors, which hurt the cows feet. They will be slaughtered before their first birthday, less than one twentieth of their natural life.

Dairy Cows produce milk for their calves, not humans. Therefore to get milk, it's necessary to keep a cow perpetually pregnant and take her calf from her after one or two days. (If it's a male, it'll be may well be killed there and then). In any case, the calves go to supply people's demand for the taste of beef – the milk and beef industries are, in reality, one and the same. Most intensively farmed cows are kept in 'zero-grazing' stalls, in dark and often dirty sheds. Per 100 cows there will typically be 55 cases of lameness and 35-40 cases of painful Mastitis per year, as well as muscle wastage and ketosis resulting from their living conditions, diet and the phenomenal strain placed on their body.

John Webster of the University of Bristol states that almost 100 per cent of cows suffer from laminitis - a disease which causes 'great pain to the cow' (Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food). Tissue lining of the foot becomes inflamed and may lead to ulcers. He continues: "To understand the pain of laminitis it helps to imagine crushing your finger nails in the door then standing on your fingertips."

The cows are used like machines instead of sentient, feeling creatures, to such an extent that one quarter of dairy cows die before they are 3, despite a natural life expectancy of 21 years. Almost none see their seventh birthday. That's the equivalent of humans dying between 8 and 20 years old, largely as a result of pure physical stress.

The amount of Soya protein required to keep the cows at such an unnaturally high level of lactation (since BSE they're not fed offal any more) is causing swathes of rainforest to be torn down in the Amazonian basin, in genetic monocultures at risk from disease. (More animals and indigenous people die in the deforestation). Then, it's adding to pollution with the needless food-miles between there and here. Only M&S and Co-op sell milk that isn't from cows fed on GM feed. (And M&S, thanks to some rather dodgy overseas investments, is bad for lots of other reasons, don't give them money!). Organic dairy farming is very little better.



800 million animals are killed every year in Britain for our food. Chances are you haven't made it to this second sentence if you're not interested, so if you're still here think for two seconds about how many animals that is. Think about how much space, and food those animals would need just to survive, let alone lead a comfortable life. Just think briefly about how it's possible to kill that many animals 'humanely'. That's roughly 2.1 million animals a day. When I first heard that figure I simply didn't believe it. It's too massive a figure to contemplate, all the same work it out as the amount of animals an average person eats a year and it looks more believable! (It's about 23 animals that you consume each year if you're still eating meat. Think about it. Line them up in your head. Couple of cows, a few pigs, a bit of sheep and some chicken. That's a lot of animals)

For the most part we don't question the need to eat animals. In Western Europe it's tradition, we inherited it from our 'hunter gatherer' roots. We never really consider what we're actually eating, it's just something that tastes nice in our mouth. This would be fine if animals were literally just meat. But they're not. They have social relationships, create friendships, and react the same way to pain as well do. I.e. If you kick a pig chances are it'll hurt the pig just the same as if someone kicked you. Now without wanting to descend into usual veggie propaganda, think about how distressing it must be being marched into a cramped van, then being herded towards a building where you can hear and see other animals being killed, only to be hung upside down, stunned, and have your throat slit open. But what happens if you're not stunned, or not killed outright by the knife? What if you're still alive when your feathers are scalded off, or what you're skinned? I'll bet that hurts quite a lot. If you knew that had happened to the animal

you were about to eat would that effect whether you'd eat it or not.

The initial reaction to this is to pretend that it's not happening. It's not as bad as the naysayers make it out to be. I mean it can't be, right? They've got to have laws against that sort of thing. Then again when you're getting through 2.1 million animals a-day how exactly do you enforce any welfare checks that there might be. The reaction that generally follows that is that we - as humans - somehow have a 'moral right' to kill animals in this sort of number because we have the ability to. Or that because... 'Well goddamit we're just smarter than they are.' But that's the same reasoning that the Plantation owners used to justify slavery.

Lets just say that we are more important than animals. Even if we're 100 times more important than a cow is, is the amount of pain caused by turning that cow into meat, really justifiable? What about if we're a thousand times more important? At this point - in Western Europe - it is clearly demonstrable that we don't need to eat animals to survive and live a healthy life (and a few research projects have actually shown that people are generally healthier on a meat free diet). That means that the cow's pain is unnecessary. The only thing eating a piece of beef is fulfilling is your happiness. What then if I get immense pleasure out of throwing rocks at sheep - is that justifiable? What if I only kick them - is that justifiable? Where, morally, are you able to draw the line.

But there's the contentious issue of, 'Well, what if humans aren't more important than animals?' The arguments that humans are more important than animals tend to run along the lines of the fact that we can choose between right and wrong, are more intelligent, are able to communicate with one



You and other animals (in which dinner is discussed)

another etc. The problem with these distinctions are two fold. What if an animal possesses these attributes to a greater degree than a particular human? I.e. A full grown pig is indisputably cleverer than a hour old child. Does that make it of greater importance? Secondly are humans graded in the same way? Are more intelligent humans worth more than stupid ones? What about those of different colours, is one skin colour worth more than another?

Even if you don't believe that animals are the moral equivalent of humans, there is still the issue of the unnecessary pain that you have caused them. I mean surely any pain you put something or someone through unnecessarily is unjustifiable? Is convention, or you palette, really worth the death of another animal? Bearing in mind that chances are this animal has spent a live of frustration and pain, and then has been killed in inhumane conditions.

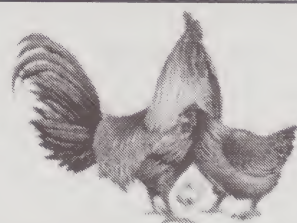
Bear in mind this is all propaganda. I don't think we as humans need to eat meat, and I don't think that we have any moral justifications to support us eating meat in our industrialised western countries. You might think I'm wrong. But think of this. Think of the 20-odd animals you ate last year. Line them up in your head. Chances are (working on averages) it's about twelve chickens, five cows, five pigs, and two sheep that you ate. Just imagine them. Each of them felt something. Each of them could experience things, they could touch, smell, taste, hear, think, and communicate. They could all feel pain. They could all feel distress. Think of those 20-odd animals that you ate last year, and think about whether their deaths were worth the pleasure that they gave you.

If that hasn't convinced you then maybe these motley-assortments of quotes and ideas will sway you!

It's bad for the environment - globally and locally. The world's rainforests are being destroyed at a rate of 80 acres per minute largely to meet the demand for space to graze cattle and grow the feed they need - most often corn, but sometimes soya beans. The phenomenal amount of faeces the industry produces is a source of global warming, groundwater pollution and acid rain from ammonia emissions. The deforestation leads to soil contaminations and erosion. Supplies of groundwater are depleted (see below) sometimes in countries which don't have enough water for its people. Biodiversity, both in the wild and in indigenous agriculture is lost. (All this from the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation)

It's insanely resource intensive. "The way that we breed animals for food is a threat to the planet. It pollutes our environment while consuming huge amounts of water, grain, petroleum, pesticides and drugs. The results are disastrous." (David Brubaker, PhD Centre for a Liveable Future, Johns Hopkins University). 70% of the grain and 50% of the water used in America goes to the meat industry. High protein feed for cattle in this country is flown in from the Amazon basin.

"[I]f you follow the corn... back to the fields where it grows, you will find an 80-million-acre monoculture that consumes more chemical herbicide and fertilizer than any other crop. Keep going and you can trace the nitrogen runoff from that crop all the way down the Mississippi into the Gulf of Mexico, where it has created (if that is the right word) a 12,000-square-mile "dead zone."



'Broiler' Chickens. "One quarter of the heavy strains of broiler chickens and turkey are in chronic pain for one third of their lives. Given that poultry meat consumption in the UK exceeds one million tonnes per annum, this must constitute in both magnitude and severity, the single most severe, systematic example of man's inhumanity to another sentient animal." (Animal Welfare: A Cool Eye Towards Eden, Blackwell Science, 1995)

"Chicks are kept in sheds called broiler houses where up to 50,000 birds are crammed with less than 600cm² of space per bird (about the space of a computer screen). The floor is concrete and laid with sawdust, wood shavings or chopped straw but soon becomes covered with the animals' excrement. The filth may attract rats and flies bringing disease and because the birds are forced to spend their entire lives standing in their own droppings, they are in terrible pain from hock burns (burns to their feet and legs), breast blisters and ulcerated feet. (Think how sore a small mouth ulcer is and then imagine having ulcers all over your feet.) The windowless sheds are artificially lit for 23 hours a day. This deters the chicks from sleeping and instead makes them eat more. A fat bird means more money. And money is used to excuse all sorts of cruel and sickening things that humans do to animals and even their own kind." From factoryfarming.org.uk website.

Egg laying hens. 90% of the eggs produced and consumed in Britain are factory farmed. Each chicken is guaranteed caged area 450cm² in which to live its life, by law (a piece of A4 paper is 620cm².) It will never be able to stretch out its wings, or see natural light. Around an egg a day falls from each chicken onto a conveyor belt running below. Naturally, only a fifth of these eggs would be laid. Many chickens have their beaks sliced off with a hot knife to stop them hurting other 'layers' (some are driven to antisocial violence by the cramped conditions). Malnutrition will often leave them deformed and in pain.

At 1 to 2 years old (from a natural lifespan of 7 years) the hens are slaughtered. By the time they arrive at the slaughterhouse, around a third have broken legs, and they typically register 10 times the normal level of stress hormones.

"Barn" eggs are produced from hens kept in loose flocks confined within a shed. Birds in this system are not caged and can roam throughout their house but are not let outside. They are provided with perches, platforms, and nestboxes and litter areas. Some barn units keep their hens in large flock sizes of up to 16,000 birds in conditions that can resemble a crowded football terrace.

"Free Range" might conjure up images of hens happily scratching in the farmyard. The reality is very different. They are often kept in flocks of up to the same density as in 'barn' sheds. EU regulations permit 1000 hens per hectare of outdoor range. They are often debeaked. They must have access to an outdoor area, even if many never manage to get there. Apparently, organic free range eggs tend to be a bit better.

But whatever the farming method, virtually all male chicks are killed within 72 hours of birth – 30 million in the UK each year. It takes 3 kilos of grain as chicken feed to produce one kilo of eggs. Each battery egg takes about 180 litres of water to produce.



Pigs. 90% of pigs are factory farmed. Recent investigations, all filmed, have shown pigs that go on to be eaten by customers of Tesco's (inc. the *Finest Range*) crammed into dark metal stalls, unable to turn around on filthy, stinking floors. The videos (from farms of many of the UK's more reputable producers) show dead and dying pigs and piglets lying on the floor among the still living. Almost all exhibited behavioural abnormalities, signs of mental damage and immense physical pain. Many were suffering from painful and terminal diseases, which it was not economical for the farmer to treat. Animals were shown starving and covered in sores. (More details, pictures and video at viva.org.uk). Fucking horrific.



Sheep probably suffer the least of all farm animals, but their life is not always as pleasant as might be imagined. They're often reared on inappropriately wet pastures, leading to diseased feet, though increasing numbers are fattened quickly indoors and are forced to breed intensively. Around 40% are exported in cramped, airless lorries (1998 figure) to the continent. Past investigations have exposed animals suffering from a lack of water and food.

It should be noted that where figures differ on issues, I've chosen to use the most conservative. E.g. some estimate the number of chickens that die in the UK each year at 800 million, others give that figure for the total number of animal deaths.

More info can be found at places like factoryfarming.co.uk, rootsofcompassion.org, viva.org.uk, peta2.co.uk, and other such places!



"[T]hose who claim to care about the well-being of human beings and the preservation of our environment should become vegetarians for that reason alone. They would thereby increase the amount of grain available to feed people elsewhere, reduce pollution, save water and energy, and cease contributing to the clearing of forests...."

"[W]hen non-vegetarians say that 'human problems come first' I cannot help wondering what exactly it is that they are doing for human beings that compels them to continue to support the wasteful, ruthless exploitation of farm animals."

Peter Singer, *Animal Liberation*, 1990

But you can go farther still, and follow the fertilizer needed to grow that corn all the way to the oil fields of the Persian Gulf.... Assuming [a steer] continues to eat 25 pounds of corn a day and reaches a weight of 1,250 pounds, he will have consumed in his lifetime roughly 284 gallons of oil.

We have succeeded in industrializing the beef calf, transforming what was once a solar-powered ruminant into the very last thing we need: another fossil-fuel machine." *New York Times Magazine*, "Power Steer" by Michael Pollan, 3/31/02

When people first grazed animals it was to convert unusable energy (in the form of grasslands they hadn't the time or capability to cultivate) into usable meat. In very few parts of the world does this logic still hold true.

It's an inefficient way for the world to produce food – partly responsible for global hunger and famine. A vegetarian diet can feed significantly more people than a meat-centred diet. The State of World Hunger, by Peter Uvin of the Brown University World Hunger Program, reported the populations potentially supported by the 1992 food supply on different diets:
Almost purely vegan diet: 6.3 billion people
15% of calories from animal products: 4.2 billion people
25% of calories from animal products: 3.2 billion people

(There are around 6 billion people on the planet right now; for more detail, read 'Diet For A Small Planet' by Frances Moore Lappe). The reason for this is this is that it typically takes about 8lb of plant protein to be fed to an animal to produce 1lb of meat protein. In the case of beef cattle, the ratio is more like 21:1 (that means 21lb of plant for 1lb of beef!).

It's bad for your health (and most dairy will come from cows fed GM feed). Animal products are full of saturated fats, which are never found in a vegan diet. You can get more than enough protein from a vegan diet, it just needs a little bit of planning.

It threatens to breed some nasty infectious diseases and spill them out across the planet. Because factory farmed animals live in such awful conditions that farmers feed them doses of antibiotics in their food. This threatens to breed in animals 'super bugs' of the same kind that are sometimes found on hospital wards, as a result of viruses evolving to defeat antibiotic medicines. If such a bug was to spread to humans we're in big trouble.

It's expensive. Weirdly, people often claim the opposite to be true. Go down your local market or shop, see for yourself. Vegetables and beans are cheap, meat is expensive. Even soya products, such as tofu, or wheat-protein based meat substitutes are cheaper than all but the skankiest meat equivalents.

It's nasty. Nothing beats good vegan cooking. Yeah, meat can taste good, but many vegans end up being really excellent cooks due to having to experiment and make their own food. Your average vegan generally have a more tasty diet than most omnivores, who subsist on tough, greyish flesh.

You have just dined
And however scrupulously the
slaughterhouse is concealed
In the graceful distance of miles,
There is complicity.

Ralph Emerson - *The Conduct of Life*
(1860)



By: Jennifer Whitney

Shattering the myth of Seattle

It's time to break more than just windows

The now infamous actions against the World Trade Organization [WTO] in Seattle have taken on mythological status, with very little actual information existing on what happened, and how. Most of the published "information" about the actions has come from such "experts" as the editor for *Spa* magazine (and no, *Spa* isn't an acronym for anything...), NGO wonks, and lefty journalists. Although there are a handful of excellent stories and articles by organizers and participants in the direct actions, these have not received widespread attention or distribution, and for the most part are somewhat narrow in scope. At the same time, liberals and organized labor – who spent much of December, 1999 falling all over each other trying to disassociate themselves from the "illegal actions" (yes, the ones which succeeded in shutting down the meetings) have since decided that in fact, it was they who shut down the WTO meetings, presumably with their mock tribunals, letter-writing campaigns, and impassioned speeches to the masses from distant podiums....

When I travel among activist circles in other regions and countries, there are two common responses I receive when I tell people I'm from Seattle – misty-eyed nostalgia, or an intensely angry bitterness, usually expressed through phrases like "Well that won't ever happen again," or "You lot were lucky that you caught them by surprise, that's the only reason you got away with it."

Though I believe that it is clear that some of the tactics which exploded onto the US (and global) activist scene in Seattle have outlived their usefulness, I think there are still important lessons not yet learned from those actions, and I believe that the popular dismissal of Seattle-as-success solely because of the surprise element is fallacious.

I got involved in the WTO organizing in August 1999, as soon as I returned from traveling. At my first meeting, I found about 50 people discussing logistics for the week-long "convergence" which would lead up to the direct action – shutting down the WTO's opening ceremony. I believed from that moment on that we would succeed in this, never once doubted it. Although not many people shared my optimism, there was always a sense that we were creating something enormous, something bigger than anything we could possibly imagine. We of course had all been hugely inspired by the London J18 actions, which added to our confidence and our audacity. That confidence, I believe now, was a major factor in our success – it was contagious, inspiring countless thousands to make the journey to Seattle, or to get off work/school for the week and come downtown from their local neighborhoods.

But confidence is too elusive to replicate, so I'll try to give more tangible reasons for our success....

Building Networks, Generating Momentum

Trying to concisely describe all the networks we developed and outreach and planning we did in those frantic months leading up to N30 is an impossibility – no single one of us was involved in every aspect, and years later I'm still meeting people who were a part of a community center, student group, or senior citizens' coalition which organized against the WTO, and which I never heard of. It's very much like the parable of the blind men describing the elephant based on which part was within their grasp – the WTO organizing looks like many different, often fearsome animals, depending on who you ask.

So, with that disclaimer, my personal experience was this:

A few weeks after I got back to town, an action camp was held north of Seattle, organized by the Ruckus Society, and attended by about 150 people from across the west coast. I didn't go, but from what I've gathered, this particular camp was crucial to the confidence and the coalescing of our organizing crew. There were intensive trainings in jail solidarity, basic legal rights, urban climbing, blockades with varying degrees of technical skill, and inspiring presentations from national and international activists about other actions (including a slideshow about London RTS, which had people talking for weeks afterwards). Not only did the camp provide people with very practical and tangible skills, it built trust

among the folks in attendance, which allowed us to persevere together later on.

Back in Seattle, we held weekly public meetings to plan the actions and the convergence, and in those meetings, we encouraged newcomers to get involved in the various working groups, which met separately in order to focus in depth on various details. Working groups included: housing, legal, medical, scenario (which was planning the details and logistics of involving thousands of people in a coordinated action), convergence space, fundraising, media, food, scheduling (of trainings and workshops), etc. In addition to the weekly Seattle meetings, there were regular regional meetings where people came together from across the Pacific Northwest (including Vancouver, BC). There were also telephone conference calls which included spokespeople from around the country, giving updates, offering and requesting resources, and confirming our sense that this was going to be really big.

The propaganda that was produced by the Direct Action Network (DAN) was a key element to making things happen. DAN produced 50,000 newspapers, and a comparable number of postcards, beginning at least four months before the actions. They had a slick, contemporary design, which now seems very familiar, but at the time was quite innovative. The newspapers had a brief description of direct action and affinity groups, a bit about the WTO, and the infamously controversial action guidelines. They were updated twice to include new information as we created it, and distribution (always the key conundrum) was nationwide, although certainly more thorough on the west coast.

The notion of carnival ran deep in our plans, carnival as the irresistible blend of party and protest, of revelry and revolution, of reclaiming public space and creating something memorable. Our objective of shutting down the summit was inextricably linked to our vision of a massive street festival which would create an alternative vision of the world we wanted. Art workshops were taking place steadily throughout this

One of these parades began on the university campus, and helped solidify many links we had with university groups. There were many student organizers in DAN, and DAN folks went to lots of university and community college meetings.

Throughout this whole time, many high school and college students were organizing autonomously – planning everything from teach-ins to walkouts on November 30 to direct actions against corporate involvement in university policy and curricula.

We also were meeting with the King County Labor Council, and with the local leadership of the AFL/CIO, while developing relationships with rank-and-file Steelworkers, Longshoreworkers, and Teamsters. In addition to attending meetings, a few people from Art and Revolution went five hours east to Spokane, where the Steelworkers had been locked out of their workplace for over a year. Art & Rev did workshops with them, making signs and banners, and talking with them about what impacts the WTO was having on the steel industry and their jobs.

All of this didn't make our relationship with organized labor smooth or easy; in fact there was a crucial meeting the week before the action in which they told us that we simply couldn't do our action before their big march (scheduled to start about 7 hours after ours) if we were to be acting in solidarity with them. However, we held our ground, and on the day of action, we had a large contingent of Steelworkers join us at 7 am to do direct action, rather than going to the labor rally which took place miles away. Later that afternoon, many Steelworkers and other radical labor folks, disobeyed their marshals, breaking through their cordon and abandoning their permitted march to join us right when we most needed to reinforce our blockades, in the height of the tear gas and repression.

Many of those relationships are still proving to be mutually beneficial; it was largely due to contacts made during Seattle organizing that union participation in Miami was as productive and as trusting as it was. Having John Sweeney, the president of the

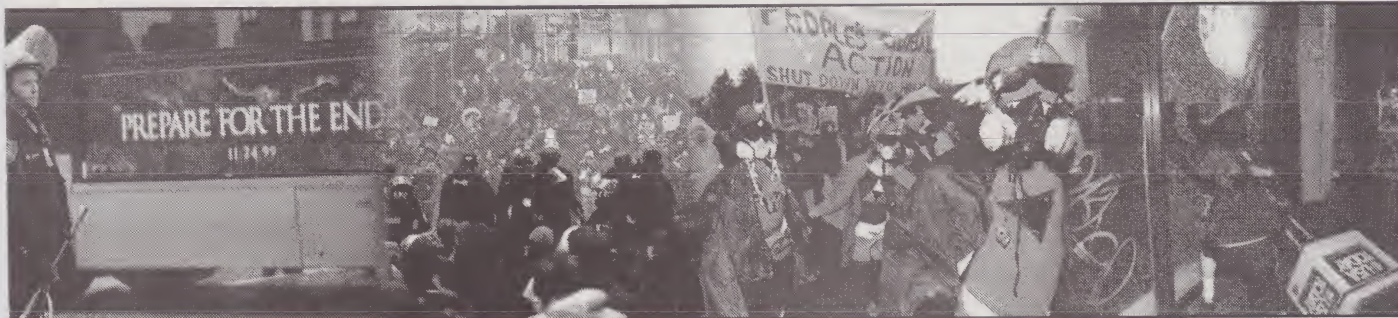
Steelworkers' union, some students, and some folks from Art and Revolution who did teach-ins, puppet-making workshops, singing and dance workshops, and general mobilization work.

As all of this was going on with DAN, a parallel mobilization was going on with the birth of Indymedia. The IMC was organized completely autonomously (in terms of meetings, funding, physical location, organizers) but there was some fairly close coordination with DAN. The creation of this completely radical and unprecedented network magnified and amplified our organizing efforts. Media activists around the world learned about the IMC and put the word out to all of their networks—not only was there a serious direct action being planned, but also an innovative proposal for building a radical participatory media outlet. As a result, countless more people came to Seattle.

There were also several other groups working in parallel – the People For Fair Trade, which was a coalition formed by Ralph Nader's Public Citizen, the People's Assembly, which was a radical grassroots Philipino-led organization, who held a separate march—the only march which had been refused a permit [DAN didn't try for a permit], Seattle Anarchist Response, which helped pull together a black bloc action, and several student groups. We had links to each of these organizations, and participated in each others' meetings, but for the most part, we were not closely working together.

Structures and Logistics

Many of the working groups were comprised of a core of pre-existing groups (notably, food, art and propaganda, medical, and trainings) and this was a huge asset, as we were able to benefit from years and years of experience without having to start everything from scratch. Initially the working groups reported back at each weekly meeting, but this gradually became unwieldy, as each group was making so much progress every week and had many things to report, so that half of each meeting consisted simply of reporting what had



crazy time, and in several public locations around town. So we were stockpiling banners, flags, and puppets, and eventually, taking them out on test runs in a series of three neighborhood parades. Designed as outreach tools and serving as morale boosters, the parades grew larger and more colorful each time.

AFL/CIO, visit the convergence center and do an interview for our free radio station was unprecedented, and currently, unions are heavily involved in pressuring the city of Miami, demanding the resignation of the police chief, and that all charges be dropped, among other things.

Some people organized a West coast caravan which consisted of a member of the

already done, leaving very little time to discuss proposals, plan new projects or make decisions.

So we formed a new group, which we called the "organizing collective." These meetings also took place once a week, and were open to anyone, although decision making was limited to one representative from each working group, who would report

on what their group was doing, and then report back to their group what others were doing. These representatives could rotate as long as any new attendees were somewhat briefed beforehand to maintain some continuity. In reality, most representatives did not rotate, and there was little attendance by anyone outside of the working groups. It's unclear to me now if people were just not interested in going to yet another meeting each week, or if the word did not get sufficiently spread that the meetings were open and public—in any case, the organizing collective faced strong critique of being a hierarchical and unaccountable inner circle, and in the urgency of the moment, I don't think we ever addressed that critique sufficiently.

Another working group was known as the "scenario" group, (what I think in the UK might have been called "logistics"). This group was convened to work out a framework for the action: we pored over maps, divided the city into 13 sections, tried to assess which would be the most risky so we could communicate that to affinity groups from out of town, decided on gathering sites and march routes, and coordinated with other working groups to provide support to the actions (such as food, water, first aid). Participation in the group was open to anyone, though in the final week of planning, it became invite-only, primarily to avoid having to spend an hour at the beginning of each meeting summarizing the previous three months' work for newcomers.

Converging and Coordinating

In addition to the mass action, what most of these groups were gearing up towards was a ten day convergence, with trainings, workshops, performances, art-making, and endless meetings to hone and refine the actions themselves. The convergence center was the hub of this ambitious project, and contained sufficient space for multiple simultaneous trainings, a large kitchen where two free meals a day were cranked out for up to 3,000 people, a free comprehensive health clinic and dispensary which saw up to 500 people per

philosophical—why to do it, when to do it, what range of options exist, to the synthesis—how to escalate tactics to match needs or desires or situations, to the pragmatic—what to do when you're locked to 8 other people and the cops try to remove your goggles or arrest your support crew...).

The importance of the trainings cannot be emphasized enough. Dozens of affinity groups formed spontaneously during trainings; people planned actions with folks they'd known only a few hours or days. Thousands of people went into the actions on November 30 having already practiced how they would set up their blockade, what they would do when the police came, how they would respond to tear gas or pepper spray, how they would behave during arrest, transport, booking, etc. It really demystified the process for people who had never been arrested before; for them, it was a revelation not only to have the entire scenario spelled out step-by-step, but actually to be "arrested" by activists in cop costumes, and to act out the entire process, including interrogation scenes where the "cops" used different lies and manipulations to try and extract information.

Trainings built confidence as well, not only in ourselves but in our community. The knowledge that hundreds of people would be on the street to give you first aid if you were hurt, and to observe and document any police action against you, and to track you through the jail and court system inspired people to push their limits, to test their endurance, to imagine what was possible and then to go one step further. Perhaps most importantly, the trainings helped dispel fear. By creating open space in which people could share their experiences of arrests, of locking their necks to bulldozers, of the intense but temporary pain of pepper spray, the fear of the unknown was banished—certainly there were still many unknowns, but shining light onto them diminished their power.

Each night we held large public meetings, called "spokescouncils." The spokescouncil was the coordinating and decision-making body of the actions, and is

authoritarian trouble-makers, but we rarely (if ever) operated under anything other than consensus.

The spokescouncil was comprised of affinity groups, groups of 5-15 people who plan actions together. Affinity groups were the fundamental unit of our actions; by organizing this way, power remained decentralized, no single person knew the entire plan (or even half of it). Many affinity groups linked up and formed a larger network, or "cluster," in order take on a more ambitious project, or to take over an entire section of town themselves. During the spokescouncil meetings, affinity group spokespeople committed to occupy and hold particular intersections, or to provide support to others. In this way, thousands of people in hundreds of affinity groups filled in our giant map on the wall, until we had commitments from everyone to completely blockade the site of the opening ceremonies. We heavily encouraged each affinity group to be autonomous—to provide basic legal, medical, communications, and any other support for themselves, not to mention to plan their own action.

Being organized in this way left things pretty spontaneous and organic, and completely autonomous. No centralized leadership could have compelled people to hold their blockades while they were being tear-gassed and beaten, but because each group had made its own plan, there was a sense of ownership of the action, which deepened everyone's commitment and endurance. As one woman said a few weeks after the action, "Everyone left Seattle feeling they did it," that each one of us was responsible for the success of the action. And it was that sense of personal responsibility and shared ownership that changed the lives of so many of us who participated.

Organized Endurance

In the years since those now historic and often mythologized actions in Seattle, I've heard incredible rewritings of history, ranging from various groups or individuals who at the time did their best to distance



day, a tea house and reading room (if anyone could concentrate amidst the surrounding ruckus), and a bicycle lending library.

One of the most important components of the convergence was the trainings. All day every day were trainings in legal rights, jail solidarity, first aid, direct action techniques and tactics (ranging from the technical—how to build lock-boxes or tripods, to the

a rather unwieldy and ambitious attempt at direct democracy. The meetings began eight days before the action, and then continued throughout the week of action, organizing jail solidarity actions and legal support. We made decisions through a formal consensus process, with a few provisions built-in to prevent total collapse if the meeting were infiltrated with cops or otherwise

themselves from the direct action now claiming to have been responsible for its success, to the strange idea that Seattle somehow just spontaneously occurred, that it was some sort of miracle that came out of the blue, and accidentally succeeded due to the element of surprise, which can never be replicated.



Yet, nothing came from out of the blue – we organized, and it paid off. We weren't just freaks and artists and full-time activists on the streets; we went into high schools and churches, labor councils and neighborhood associations, workplaces and universities. Those people were on the streets with us; those people flooded the city council meetings afterwards, damning the police and the city, not only for their illustrious abuses and constitutional violations, but also for having invited the WTO to meet in our city in the first place. The teach-ins, workshops, and presentations, which took place across town for months in advance, ignited the population's anger and propelled them into the streets, more than a single flyer

or workshop ever could have. Once they were in the streets – tasting the freedom of reclaiming their city (even for only a day), experiencing the joy of the streets filled with music and festivity rather than traffic, and feeling the pride at the end of the week of having won, they were not ready to give it up, nor would they ever forget it.

On the day of the action, the blending of art and action, carnival and revolution manifested in breathtaking ways. A stage was built across an entire intersection, and people locked themselves to it, creating an interactive blockade, on which innumerable performances took place throughout the day. Other intersections were blocked with things ranging from a fourlane-wide puppet, to a giant inflatable whale, to a huge mural stretching between the sidewalks with paint available to anyone who wished to add to it.

Additionally, people were prepared to be out all day. There were groups roaming the streets distributing food and water, bringing first aid materials and medical skills where needed, and providing entertainment to folks locked-down and unable to see the breadth of the take-over of the city. There was a butoh dance troupe, a marching band, and independent media makers spreading news from one part of town to the next, and all over the world; there were innumerable performers – puppeteers and hip-hop rhymers, unicyclists and acrobats, firebreathers and choral groups. Because of this preparation, this attention to detail – not only providing for our physical needs, but our need for joy and laughter – the blockades were maintained long after the opening ceremonies were cancelled. The capacity for endurance was phenomenal. As Rowena Kennedy Epstein wrote later, "I remember thinking I would never stop. My body was caving in on me, my eyes were swollen, my feet were bleeding, and I never anticipated

stopping. I would like to think that a generation never anticipated stopping."

There was a level of ingenuity, autonomy, and creativity that I haven't seen at US (or any other) actions since. These various blockades were organized entirely by affinity groups, and no one knew in advance the sum total of what was being planned. This is something that is often forgotten, in the myth-making during the years since Seattle – sure, it's true that we succeeded in part because we caught them by surprise. But the element of surprise was nothing compared to the innovation and creativity that thousands of people demonstrated. I have been to numerous actions since, in many parts of the world, and I have not yet seen the level of autonomous participation by affinity groups that we had in Seattle, nor have I seen such a solid structure and framework for an action, backed by solid organizing for months in advance.

Failure to Learn, Failure to Innovate

What I see these days is that affinity groups turn up with no particular plan, and then spend a week complaining that there is nothing to do, as if local organizers are supposed to brainstorm hundreds of ideas from which people can choose. Somehow, many activists have gone from being creative and active participants to being in a more passive, spectator role, waiting for someone else to come up with the ideas, and then – more often than not – shooting down each idea as being impractical, oppressive, reformist, etc. This passivity and enthusiasm for criticizing from one's comfort zone (in which one does nothing at all, so as not to be criticized...) is but one element in the





Blocking traffic with giant puppets

fizzling and current failures of this particular movement in the US.

Another factor in our weakened position is that frequently, actions are planned with no clear goal. Advancing on a fence is not a useful goal around which people can organize creative actions. Even if you reach the fence, and even if you tear it down, then what, apart from getting beaten, gassed, arrested, or dispersed? In Seattle, our goals were explicit, and well publicized months in advance. We were going to shut down the meeting, prevent it from even starting, and our tactics were to use various blockade techniques while having a street festival which occupied the entire city center. Within those goals are endless possibilities for creative participation that go well beyond making a clever banner or chanting a new slogan. Another example of an action with a clear goal was in Prague, where organizers decided to blockade the IMF/WB delegates inside their conference center. Unfortunately, many people who came from other countries (especially the UK) at the last minute never knew about this goal, and assumed that the intent was the same as in Seattle, to prevent them from entering. So this is another problem – the Prague organizers could have had better links and better information dispersal to internationals arriving in the final days, and traveling activists would do well to make a greater effort to learn what is actually being planned and find a way to contribute to the existing action, rather than assuming that they know better than those working locally for months.

Ultimately, it is the process which is key, not the triumph of ideology, but the constant reinvention of what "revolution" looks like, the refusal to accept a static

definition, the commitment to evolving the idea of revolution, to innovating our tactics, and to looking beyond the next action, the next summit, the next fence against which we will throw our bodies....

Audacity Gets the Goods

There are many ideas floating around of where to go from here. Many people are saying that we need to stop always defining ourselves by what we are against and start showing what we are for. Obviously, this is a good idea, but makes for a difficult action plan. Setting up autonomous zones outside summit meetings without posing any particular threat to the power structure seems like a retreat to me, a retreat into a temporary commune, a comfort zone, into which few people outside our limited and subculture-based circles will enter.

Retreating from direct action at this point in time, when there is so much at stake, and when we have them on the run more than ever before, I believe, is a mistake. But it is also a mistake to continue moving forward with vague notions of "direct action" which are illprepared and have little "action" involved. It is useful to take a look at the old IWW (Industrial Workers of the World) slogan – "Direct action gets the goods" because it begs the immediate question – what constitutes "the goods" these days? What is it, exactly, that we are after?

If we don't have clearly identifiable goals, how can people commit to put their bodies on the line to meet them? How can we know if we have succeeded if we don't know what we set out to achieve? The goals don't have to be obviously attainable (i.e.: shutting down the City of London, or the WTO meeting), but they must be audacious, ambitious, and challenging enough to inspire

folks to work towards them, to dare to dream beyond the probable, to expand the definition of the possible.

Revolutionary social change has never been won by people who thought "Well, we should be really careful because they'll just fuck us over if we are too successful," or "They've got us totally outnumbered, we better just apply for a permit and stop pretending like we'll ever really make a difference."

Our actions have become almost exclusively symbolic and spectacular, and although symbolism can be useful in triggering imaginations and challenging institutions, we need to have some concrete and tangible successes to balance out the symbolic ones; otherwise we end up alienating ourselves from our own actions, our numbers dwindle, we come away from each action less inspired and more 'damaged, injured, and burned out. Meanwhile, that which we call "action" grows less and less active, less and less direct.

But, as Mike Prokosch and Tony LoPresti wrote in their recent (January 2004) article, *Next Steps in the US Global Justice Movement*:

"Direct action doesn't have to be this way. When it has clear goals, it can organize focused, disciplined, extremely effective actions. Seattle is the example. Before it came a quarter-century of actions, learning, and refinement starting in the anti-nuclear movement. In preparation for it, Northwest activists built affinity groups and did community education for a year. The myth that Seattle was a spontaneous coming-together is one of the most destructive myths among many in direct action circles."

It's time to shatter the myth.

Reprinted from *Days Of Dissent*. dissent.org.uk.

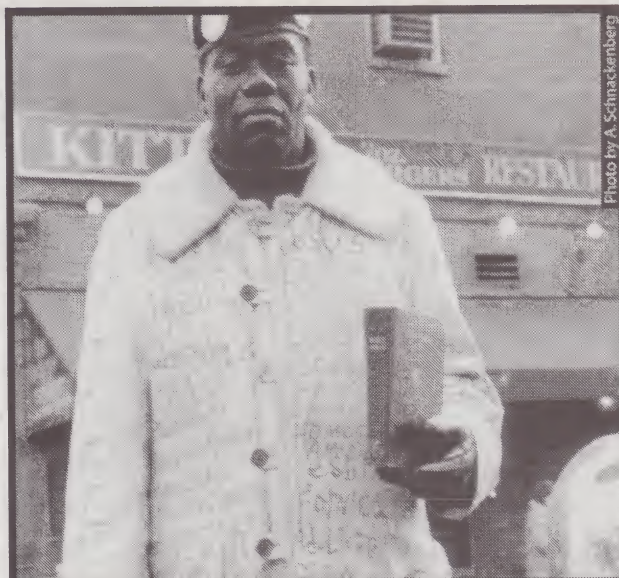


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Careless Talk Costs Live December 2003
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Karate "Pockets"

The seventh album from Southern's favourite jazz-masters Karate - builds on the unique styles set down in previous albums, blending speeded rock songwriting with quirky, soulful rhythms.
CD/LP



Record Reviews

Reviews are based entirely on personal opinion in poorly phrased english. If you don't like the way we review things then don't send us records. Likewise if you don't like a review flame the reviewer not RN... We're beginning to get sick of reviewing 'promo only' releases, so we may very well only review albums with full artwork etc for #9 and after. Consider that a warning or something. Deadline for #9 = November 18th.

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like didn't sound like it would appeal to me. I guess I should have had more faith in In At The Deep End for releasing good music. So everything you've probably heard about Bait is probably true (if you've heard anything that is). They don't sound a million miles from bands like Earth Crisis, and have a distinctly metal edge to the record, but for whatever reason I found them really enjoyable. It's not the best record that I've ever heard, but it's certainly a lot better than most! (edd)
In At The Deep End

Blacken The Skies St

My life became instantly better when I found this CD. This is a. punk as fuck. b. crust as fuck and c. political as fuck. The ex-Catharsis, CrimethInc kids jam out songs about desperation, depression and darkness, but with a feeling of hope just tucked away under the layers of music and bitter lyrics. This is awesome. I need say no more.
CrimethInc (US)/ Active Distribution (UK)

Blame it on Edd Milk The World

So just as everyone's talking about how the UK punk/ ska scene is slowly dying Blame It On Edd show up with their fucking amazing debut album. I have no idea whether this is going to stop the ship from going down, but at least if it's gonna sink we'll have some good music to listen to. Not too far removed from the weirdness of Ye Wiles or Citizen Fish, but with a slightly more orthodox song structure than those two bands. It's fucking awesome, really this is great! (edd)

Bones Brigade *Focused*

I think this is currently my favorite band. I mean these guys are so fucking incredible that they even take a sample from the 80s skate movie 'Thrashin'. These kids play music to skate to, thrashy, fast and brash, with a healthy disdain for jocks and hardcore scenesters. It's fucking awesome. If you want a more concrete indication of what they sound like they've lost members to Cut The Shit and The Rites, and sound similar to those two. Hopefully they'll be able to come tour over in this country soon. (edd)
Revelation Records

Boxed In S/t 12"

Boxed In play hardcore like it should be. Fast, hard and with awesome lyrics. This style of HC often has a habit of forming into one long song as long as the side of the 12" it's on, but Boxed In manage to avoid this happening. Top stuff. (bob)
Crime Scene Records, Po Box 13, 82 Colston St, Bristol, BS1 5BB

The Break In This Ends With Us

The long awaited EP finally arrives. I was pretty excited about getting this since they've only put out two new songs in almost a year. Thankfully it doesn't disappoint. Excellent moshy, heavy hardcore, not a million miles away from Throwdown. Its awesome, I can't wait for the full length at the start of next year. (edd)
Dead and Gone Records (see ad)

Bullets and Octane The Revelry

This is a Bon Jovi-wannabe, stadium rock, band masquerading as a punk band, by having edgy art and a 'punk' attitude. They still like they want to be rock stars though, and they make bad music on top of that. Yeah, I'm definitely not 'feeling' this record. (edd)
criterionrecords.com



7 Seconds

Take It Back, Take It On, Take It Over

So let's get this straight I love 7 Seconds as much as anyone else. Songs like 'Rock Together, Walk Together' are some of my all time favorite songs up there with 'In My Eyes'. The difference is that in 2004 Ian Mackaye is no longer asking 'what the fuck have you done?'. Kevin Seconds, and the rest of the band don't seem to have moved on in the same way that the rest of their peers have done, and are just rehashing old hits. I mean if this is the first time that you hear 7 Seconds you're going to think this is absolutely amazing, but after almost 20 years you would have thought that they would have added slightly to their sound, I suppose at least they have decent production nowadays. (bob)
SideOneDummy



Abusive Youth

Fight The Good Fight

Early 80s UK style anarcho-punk. Not bad, and undoubtedly better than almost any of the other vapid shit I've had to review this issue. Clearly influenced by Crass, Subhumans, Conflict et al. With a bit of time they could become quite decent. (Christian)
Anarchy Records



Action Action

Don't cut your fabric to this year's fashion

"If you are a fan of Franz Ferdinand, The Killers, The Rapture, Interpool, The Yeah Yeah Yeah's and Hot Hot Heat, Action Action is for you!! Synth pop colliding with guitar driven indie pop and spine tingling vocals." If on the other hand you have a taste in music you might want to avoid. This is worse than even the press release describes. Bad art school, Morrissey inspired drivel. (edd)
Victory Records

Active Slaughter 'Ave a Butchers

Ok first things first a big apology to Jake of Active Slaughter who had come to the conclusion that I was never going to get round to reviewing this. It took me a while but finally I have. Active Slaughter are - for lack of better description - anarcho street punk, with a particular focus on the issues of animal rights. Thankfully neither the lyrics or music is as obvious as I've come to expect from this style of music, and I've actually been listening to this an awful lot recently, which I guess means it can't be all bad! (edd)
ACAB, Po Box 35913, London, N17 9YP



Anata

Under a Stone with No Inscription

Good thing this had a press release, as I would have had no idea what these guys are called (those big pointy death metal signs look cool but are impossible to read), which would be a shame as they rock! Brutal technical death metal is the name of the game here, but rather than just bludgeon the listener into submission these guys weld more melodic-Gothenburg style riffs as well as also taking part in some insane jazz-metal insanity, which when all mixed together comes off brilliantly. There are some definite hooks and catchy riffs here, but the vocals and drumming (which is fucking amazing it needs to be pointed out) make sure that there is no chance that these guys are "soft". Like a scary but enjoyable headfuck between Ephial Duath, At the Gates and the Dillinger Escape Plan this has really impressed me. (mikey)
Wicked World

Bait

Anatomy of Disaster

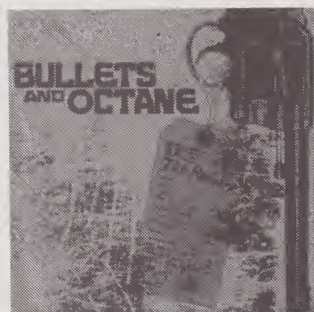
I really didn't expect to like this record. The artwork really doesn't do it for me and what I'd been told the band sounded

Record Reviews



Burning Skies **Murder by Means of Existence**

Hooo hooo, oh goody! Metallic hardcore from Bristol, if you're at all familiar with Lifeforce records you'll probably have a good idea what these guys are like sound wise, if not think of the Haunted (especially in terms of vocals) hooking up with Stampin Ground wanting to smash the shit out of all and sundry. OK, although not very original or ground-breaking this just WORKS so well. The double bass fills are monstrous, and along with the guitars create a slab of brutal listening which retains just the right amount of melody to keep it all flowing along nicely. If you really can't get enough of this kind of metal (and I for one certainly can't!) then check these guys out. They have a song called "Emo Assassination", which can only be a good thing! (mikey)
 Lifeforce records



Bury Your Dead **Cover Your Traces**

So I know that I'm a PC punk and that I sometimes overreact to shit, but really why the fuck does a hardcore band feel the need to show the band murdering a girl who has slept with someone who was cheating on their girlfriend (i.e. the boy fucked up not the girl)? It doesn't really hold any relevance to the lyrics is violent, and really fucking pointless. I don't get it. Whatever the band aren't very good anyway. They sound like Earth Crisis... I suppose they would do they're on Victory. (edd)
 Victory Records

Call Me Lightning **The Trouble We're In**

I was initially sceptical of this. The artwork made it look like it was going to be crap! I mentally kicked myself - as usual - when I finally listened to. These guys are a more punk rock Jesus Lizard with crazy time changes, and weird lyrically matter. I listened to it compulsively when I was helping out at a friends store recently. Very, very awesome. (edd)
 Revelation Records

Burning Coalition *The American Power of Fuck*



Chillerton **S/t EP & 7"**

Chillerton are on of my favourite bands in the UK at the moment. Their side of the split with When All Else Fails - that came out last year - was one of my favourite EPs of 2003. They play impassioned hardcore punk, somewhere between Against Me and Catharsis (think about it, it kind of makes sense!). I was a little concerned when I learnt that they had changed the dynamic by adding female vocals onto a few of their tracks, but thankfully it seems to have worked. The rest of the EP works well too with awesome song after awesome song. (Oh for those who care about such things the 7" is on fancy clear vinyl with a colour marble effect!) (edd)
 Cat N Cakey (see ad)/ Bosstunage

Cpt Phallus **The Second Coming**

OK so look at the cover of this CD. What do you think they sound like? Right! There's your review then. (bob)?

Cipher System/By Night **Split CD**

In referring to Lifeforce records as being hit and miss (see The Lost review) I feel I should start this review by saying that they have hit the target so solidly smack on the bullseye that they've succeeded in knocking the target right over onto the floor. I love this release and have become addicted to it. Cipher System start the album of with three rather wonderful tracks that can only be described as a mix between the technical proficiency of Dark Tranquillity and the more hardcore influence of Heaven Shall Burn. By Night took me longer to get into for at first I had decided that the production quality was lower on their three tracks than on the ones submitted by Cipher System. When two bands share a CD/7"/10"/whatever they make themselves so readily comparable to the each other, regardless of style, that at first I felt that By Night was more the evil twin that we should all feel ashamed of and lock in a cupboard under the stairs. Of course had I done anything vaguely resembling this I would have deprived myself greatly. Once I got passed the

apparent difference in recording quality (I'm now convinced it's just the overdrive used by By Night and not the actual recording quality at all) I was pleasantly surprised by a wonderful menagerie of blast beats, double bass pedal, speed, grunted vocals, and thunderous guitar riffs. It's actually a delightfully heavy three tracks and I'm not complaining. Infact it's everything I've come to expect from these hardcore influenced death metal bands (or is it the other way, I've really lost track of which genre is influencing the other these days. Or maybe we've strayed into some unconventional grey-area where such considerations are no longer needed, anyway...). I think I'd have a hard time choosing a favourite band so quite simply I'm not going to. (Geoff)
 Lifeforce Records

Coalition **The Sight and the Sound**

Angry modern hardcore from Detroit. At times they sound like slightly dulled No Warning, but more often than not they go for a tougher Hope Conspiracy sound. Oh, and the opener, "With Time", has a godawful guitar lick that just reminds me of how much I can't stand Maiden. This record's pretty competent and it's quite catchy in places, but ultimately it leaves you feeling utterly uninspired. The band really do sound like they're just going through the motions. (Alan)
 What Feeds the Fire Records

Colossal **Welcome the Problems**

Oooh, wow. Now this is really, really nice. It's kinda tricky though to describe what Colossal sound like. A mixture of Do Make Say Think with Fugazi, at their most mellow, is the best I can come up with. I mean, its indie rock, but its just played so nicely, with interesting song structures, great drumming, and also fantastic use of a trumpet by one of the guitar players which gives the songs a bit more vibrancy and effect. The vocals are lovely, but aren't the lead focus of the music, which is instead based on textures and tangents and its just really fantastic music to listen and relax (and sometimes dance) to. (mikey)
 Great, great stuff.
 Asian man records

Danzig **Circe Of Snakes**

So here we have Danzig. Those of you who have been reading my reviews will have noticed that I'm in a particularly scathing mode lately and Danzig certainly are not escaping me. Whether it's the women with too much of their asses inserted into their lips that adorn the inlay of the weak as fuck pissy goth rock that's to be found on the CD that's turned me of this record I haven't been bothered to actually decide. Either way there's more than enough to not be interested in here and yet again it's another record by Regain Records and oh boy do they know a winner we they see one. Actually having heard this I can't understand how it is Danzig has made a name for himself as a solo artist. (Geoff)
 Regain Records

Das Oath **S/t**

So Das Oath return this time with blank pieces of paper, rather than the colourful sexual positions that's filled previous stuff. The sound hasn't changed though. It's still super-fast, angry and discordant hardcore. If you haven't already you need to check this out. (edd)
 Dim Mak Records

Dead Like Dallas **The Great Midwestern Tragedy**

For some reason the first time that I listened to this I didn't think it was very good. I think I must have been in a bad mood cause this is really good melodic hardcore, with more than a little influence from emo like Rites of Spring. Some of the songs on here go a little bit AWOL, and it might have been a good idea for the band to have purged a couple rather than put all ten songs on here, but all the same a good record. (edd)
 Deadlikedallas.com

Deadsoil **The Venom Divine**

Coming from the more "-core" end of "metal-core", Germany's Deadsoil bring to mind bands like Terror



Record Reviews

and Hatebreed, but they lack the X factor that takes band playing this style of hardcore to the next level. It just feels a bit predictable and tired. That's not to say this was a terrible listen, just a rather uninspiring one. (mikey)
Lifeforce records

Die So Fluid Spawn Of Dysfunction

This is just femal vocaled yuck. It really is something that should never have been committed to plastic because it means that now I have to sort through this mess and try and conjure up words explain just why this is so bad. I suppose it's because it sounds like Linkin Park that I'm so immediatly put of this record, but even more it seems that the female vocals are being flaunted and every song has been written in a way as if it's trying to say 'look at me, I've got female vocals, aren't I great? I deserve applause for having female vocals, and just incase you've missed it I'm not going to descend into a few bars or tranquillity just so you can hear that wonderful vocals even more'. Of course I'm being harsh, but this album isn't worth my time, or anyone elses for that matter. (Geoff)
Cartesian Records/Cargo Records

The Dillinger Escape Plan Miss Machine

I'm going to start by saying that when they released their ep with Mike Patton, Mike Patton had pretty much turned them into Mr Bungle. Now however they are simply Mr Bungle without Mike Patton. I'm not actually ebing as derogatory as that sounds and I do like this album. There's a more menacing and brooding feel to many of the tracks whilst at the same time this album is still packed full of that loveable technical hardcore that we've all come to expect from DEP. However having said all of this there are no memorable riffs or even tracks and I just feel let down a little by this record. It's good, don't get me wrong but I don't think it's that great. Certainly not enough to make me ecstatic. (Geoff)
Relapse

Dirty Half Dozen Six Way Split CD

This is a really neat CD - it's well over an hour of good hardcore from six south coast bands (Pilger, Humans The Size Of Microphones, Circus Act, Disoma, Intent, and You're Smiling Now But We'll All Turn Into Demons) and I really love the way the South Coast ands together and does things like this. There's a very nice mix of styles on here fro the Posi Hardcore of Pilger to the 15 minute thrash track supplied by YSNBWATID. However Intent are probably the band that surprised me most on this record. I remember reviewing their demo a while back now and at the time they were still wasting a lot of time doing this rather irritating mix of thrash songs and mid-tempo songs a la Bad Religion and Pennywise. Now, although they still vary their temp, there isn't a song that they've submitted that doesn't contain at least some thrash and I really think it works for them. I've really enjoyed listening to this CD, I think it's great. I ahev no idea how much it costs, probably around a £5 but it's worth double that. (Geoff)
Milliepeedrecords@hotmail.com

District Don't Mess With The Hard Punx

More tiresome wannabe anarcho/street punk that thinks it can earn that distinction by having mockney (it sounds so put on) vocals alone. The music is nothing to shout about - it's so bloody slow and the recording quality is just do fucking good which is one of the reasons why I hate CD releases. I love all the badly produced punk releases on dodgily printed vinyl from the 80's. Instead we have this nonsense that is just an insult to all the old great punk bands, Rudimentary Peni, Subhumans, Conflict, Active Minds, etc. This is rubbish and the band should feel ashamed at themselves for playing at being a punk band. (Geoff)
... People Like You Records

The Down And Outs Boys From The Blackstuff

I really want to like this, but it just isn't happening, it's just not very good. So these guys come from Liverpool and most (if not all) the members are also in SecondsxOut. This is the punk side-project (or

depending on how you look at it SecondsxOut is the hardcore side-project). Maybe it's because I really fucking love SecondsxOut that I can't get my head properly around this. All the same these guys brand of punk doesn't really do a lot for me! (edd)
Dead and Gone Records

The Eddie Haskell's Dumpster Divin'

These guys rip off all the early punk rock greats. An almost perfect blend between The X-Ray Specs, Social D, DKs etc etc. If you don't know what those guys sound like then they're not a million miles from the Epoxies on Fat Wreck Chords. It shouldn't be as infectious or as enjoyable as it is. The lyrics, music and artwork are all totally standard and done by a thousand different bands many times before, but the Eddies Haskell's just manage to put something extra into it that you don't often here. I think it's called passion. (edd)
Superspeedway Music, 108 Paseo De San Antonio, San Jose, CA. 95113 USA

Ekkaia Demasiado Tarde Para Pedir Perdon LP

It's great to see Stonehenge putting out records again. A bad record on Stonehenge is as rare as a good record on Goodlife! This Spanish band play brutal crust HC and play it well. Not really much else to say. You will know if you want this (and I'm slightly concerned for you musical decency if you don't!) (Christian)
Many labels including Stonehenge

The Enablers / Bedford Falls Split 7"

Woops this has taken quite a long time to review. Sorry! Nice split 7" from Newest Industry here. The Enablers play melodic rock, with personal lyrics, whilst Bedford Falls is more straight-up melodic punk rock. Personally I found myself preferring Bedford Falls. (edd)
Newest Industry

Endicott The Words in Ink Don't Lie

This started off ok, but quickly descended into bad screaming, interspersed with melodic vocals, and posturing. Definitely one to avoid. (edd)
Equal Vision Records

Exit Condition 1988-1994

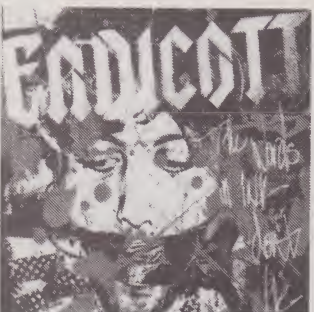
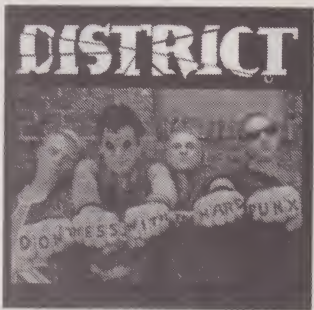
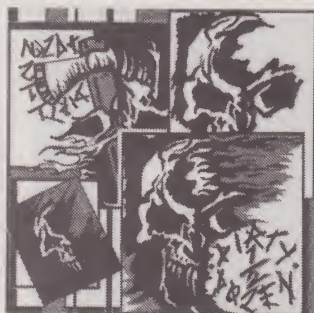
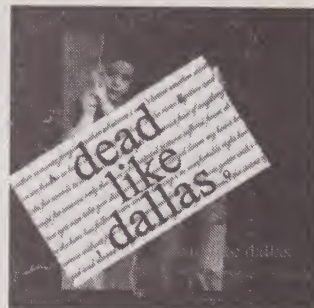
This is a very different release from Boss Tuneage and it's more the sort of stuff I think they should be releasing. Exit Condition are not the most innovative band to have ever exited but their 3-chord punk thrash coupled with shouty vocals (hurrah! See explanation in Lunasuit review). I have trouble to fault this record, it's everything I've been saying Boss Tuneage records are not and should be. Getting this record kinda reminds me of when Blackfish did an Instigators reprint and in both cases it's kinda nice to see old punk, before punk was distorted by pop influences, being reprinted and promoted to a new generation. It's quite refreshing. (Geoff)
Boss Tuneage

Everything For Some A Thought Refused

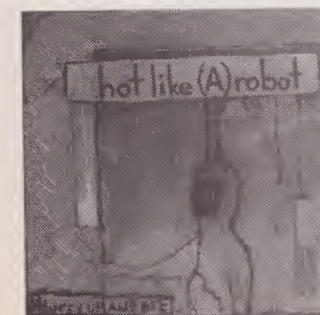
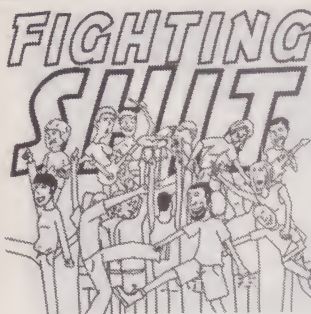
For some reason whenever a band has political lyrics I feel bad if I don't like them, and try really hard to find something good in their sound. Everything for Some is kind of one of those occasions, I'm not that hot on the music but want to find something good to say about them. Maybe it's just not my thing I never really got into Helmet and I can definitely hear that in this... Check it out yourself, maybe you'll like it! (edd)
In At The Deep End Records

Fallout 40 Attain To A Calm

Unfortunately in todays modern society where music critics run rampage bring many aspiring young bands to the brink of tears having high production doesn't mean you're going to have a good record. Fallout 40 are the best example of this. This is crap, over produced crap. People criticise me for being harsh but I can't, with any intellectual integrity, say anything nice about this. It's absent minded bollocks and it



Record Reviews



tarnishes the name of punk and hardcore and as these are genres that I care great about and love, even to the point of fanaticism, I must in all good conscience damn this band. I don't want to review this any longer because it isn't deserving of my time. I just want more Malkovich and less of this punk that's like emo trying to out grow itself. (Geoff)
You And Whose Army Records

Fighting Shit S/t

I saw these guys in a pretty much empty room down in Kingston when they were playing with Dead After School. They were pretty fucking awesome to say the least. Though this record doesn't have amazing production it's equally good. The band are fast and thrashy ripping off bands like DS13, Los Crudos, and Das Oath, which should give you a kind of idea of where they're coming from musically. The band also got a whole load of political lyrics chucked in for good measure. Really fucking awesome. (edd)
www.fightingshit.tk / try the Cat N Cakey distro for getting copies in the UK.

Fig 4.0 / Twofold aneighttracksplitseveninchrecord

Listening to Fig 4.0 makes me sad to be reminded at just how amazing they were, and now they're gone forever! So this split took almost as long to come out as the HHN Fig 4.0 / Ensign split that came out in 2003, but it's finally here, and lives up to all it's promise. Fig 4.0 are amazing in their discordant punk goodness, whilst Twofold also pull out the goods with their more regular punk stylings. On top of the good music the 7" is also lovingly encased, hand screened, and the vinyl is pressed in luminous green. (edd)
theaction_index@hotmail.com

Flick Knives and Splinters If she could speak

I fucking hate it when I hear an awesome band and then learn that they split up. I think there should be a law against it. Officially if you record a good record, or demo you *have* to go out and tour. Oh well at least I got their album to keep me company. It's somewhere between a thrashier Nerve Agents, and a more hardcore Harum Scarum ('Mental Health' era). The band's made up of driving guitar riffs, complemented by the singer's scream, it's really, really fast, and really, really good. This is rad, which makes it all the more of a shame that these guys have split up. Oh well I just hope that they go and form a new one that's as good as this! (edd)

Flogging Molly Within a Mile From Home

I refuse to review this until the cheapskate cunts at Side One include some packaging. They do have Matt Hensley in them though! (Christian)
Side One Dummy

Frontside Forgive Us Our Sins

Oh joy, another one of these fashionable pseudo-death/black metal bands. I'll be honest and say straight out that I don't like this release. For one it's boring and the stale combination of chugga-chugga riffs and blast beats are entirely to blame for this. This record is nothing more than a poor attempt at trying to be an extreme band. However this record is too heavily produced and as a result any benefit that downtuned and distorted guitars give in heaviness stakes is nullified by this. I wonder if the band are to blame though for this record's shortcomings. The production is so high and so much money has been poured into this release (the press-release talks of 1000 promos being sent out) that it would surprise me if Regain Records just wanted a commercial and easily promotable release from this. (Geoff)
Regain Records

Fucked Up Epics in Minutes

I've temporarily mislaid my copy of this and I've spent the last day frantically searching for it with the urgency of a smackhead. This is kinda like a retrospective discography for this Toronto band, who seem to know everyone in their local hardcore scene. Fucked Up played raw, unpolished punk rock like how it was supposed to be. They got lumped in with hardcore for

various reasons, and I can see similarities to Rollins-era Black Flag, but I can easily believe that this band may have stood at odds to many of the bands they would have shared shows with. Whatever, who cares, I'd take this record over a thousand American Nightmare cry-a-thons, if only cos everything about it intrigues me, from the constant anti-mod slurs ("FUCK MODISH ATTITUDES!!!!" is written on the sleeve), to the live radio set where the singer declares "we're only playing Spymaster (?) covers tonight", to the (allegedly) improvised vocals on the demo. Of course, apart from that, the music is pretty cool too. Go and buy this to add some diversity to your collection. (Alan)
Deranged Records

Gay For Johnny Depp Erotically Charged Dance Songs for the Desperate

Technically an anonymous band but apparently featuring members of Instruction and Garrison doing lots of fast screaming for whatever reason and annoying odd sound bites on the end track. (Natalie)
Firefly

GGGGibby Haynes And His Problem

This is just a load of nonsense and is probably one of the most irritating releases I've had to listen to. It's either the irritatingly slow tempo, irritating whailing guitar lead, irritating guitar release, or irritating excuse for singing, but something about this album just irritates me badly. Hats off to them for having the stupidest name I've heard in years and an equally stupid graphic cover. (Geoff)
Surfdog Records

Gods of Fire Wrath of the Gods

He he, I think this could be a joke, considering the band members are called things like DJ Blood Sacrifice, Prometheus and Saucy Jack. But then it could be serious, which would also rule! Pure cheesy power metal, very iron Maiden-esque. The concepts for the songs are amazing, i.e. "Hyperion", where the singer is attacked by an alien curse and finds himself a "slave to time" and that he gets younger every day, or "City of Gold" about the Incas and so forth. Er yeah, I've no idea how you'd get your hands on this but this just made me laugh and was musically pretty good. Yay for metal! (mikey)
Black Thirteen records

The Great Deceiver Terra Incognito

This is a resoundingly average release. Not only have TGD failed to excite me but there isn't even any good (not great) guitar work for me to get in the least bit worked up about. Each song kinda starts in a cool way but doesn't go any where and after about 50 seconds boredom has hit and nothing happens between then and the end of the album to relieve me. I think this is all I need to say about this album. (Geoff)
Peaceville Records

Guttermouth Live at the House of Blues

One of the worst things about doing stuff for fanzines is having to review crap bands and their crap CDs, and Guttermouth epitomise the 'crap band'. Horrible pop punk with shitty lyrics, and ugly artwork. Live they're even worse than on regular CD (this is a live CD afterall), and you realise just how moronic they and their fans must be. This is pretty fucking terrible. (edd)
Kung Fu Records

Halo Friendlies Get Real

Oh no, no, no! I can see Edd laughing at me right now giving me this to review. I just don't really know where to start with this. Well, firstly this is music so over produced and sugary it makes me feel sickly listening to it. Just imagine all those crappy clichéd "pop punky rock n roll" bands (off the top of my head - Mest, Good Charlotte, American Hi Fi etc..) put together, with guitars which sound like keyboards, and then crappy girl vocals over the top. The whole package is finished off with lovely promo pics of the girls in their Hot Topic "punk" clothes. There are plenty of great punk bands



Record Reviews

who play things from the poppy side of things, but this just fucking sucks. (mikey)
Tooth and Nail records

Head Automatica Decadence

Daryl Palumbo (of Glassjaw fame) does rock with weird electronic farts to add dimension or something equally banal. The result is something like Garbage, if anyone remembers them. The lyrics sound like Madonna and, at times, especially during "Please, Please, Please", the music isn't a million miles off her either. Oh Jesus. I bet you the NME love this. Music like this is like the emperor's new clothes to me. All style, no substance. I'll leave this record for the insincere "indie club" fashionistas who will probably be listening to trance this time next year. As for Palumbo, now he's a boozier, is he gonna get rid of that XXX tatt on the inside of his lip? And I could have sworn the guy once told a journalist that he couldn't drink cos of his Crohn's disease or something? Ah well, who cares, Glassjaw's last good release was in 2000. (Alan)
Warner Bros

Hey Colossus vs Lords Split 7"

So this should have got reviewed last issue but what with turntables breaking and general moving about crap that didn't happen. So lets start with the basic Hey Colossus play doomy, sludgy hardcore with lots of growls, and Black Sabbath grooves. They are awesome. Lords are at the opposite end of the HC spectrum, playing high end, arty, (slightly) schizoid hardcore. They are also awesome. The 7" that this has been pressed onto is equally awesome since it's nice and thick so even the crappiest record player (like we have) can pick up the grooves and amplify the music perfectly, and doesn't distort even when you put it really loud. To conclude then: this is awesome. I shouldn't need to say more. (bob)
Theory of Nothing c/o Rough Trade, West London (?)

Hot like (a) Robot Hurry Up and Die

How these guys managed to record 10 songs in one day, and end up with a record that really doesn't sound that bad is pretty amazing. The band don't really seem to have pinned down their sound yet, lurching from style to style even within songs. One minute all arty punk rock the next a weird (and really horrible) punk-nu-grunge hybrid thing. There's a couple of alright songs on here, but for the most part they promise a lot and then fail to deliver. (edd)
Criterionrecords.com

Hot Water Music The New What Next

I've been avoiding listening to this in case I'm disappointed by it like I was with the last record. I only finally put it on because I had to so that I could write a review of it. Thankfully it doesn't disappoint. It's not the best thing that they've ever recorded, but it has thankfully gone back towards the melodic hardcore niche they'd created for themselves. They're one of the best bands that plays this stuff, and thankfully the new album lives up to that! (edd)
Epitaph

The Holy Mountain Bloodstains Across Your Face

The debut 7" by this band was amazing. This is just as good but there is more of it! As with the 7" musically it can best be described as Combat/Wounded/Veteran (members of.. of whom are in this band) and Tragedy with amazing lyrics. This LP is topped off by an amazing Crass cover. You must have the intelligence of George W. Bush if you don't buy this! (Christian)
No Idea

Hot Cross

Fair Trades and Fairwells

Oh dear. I'm most disappointed to report that this is shit. There are few things worse than amazing bands putting out dire music! The 10" was amazing as was the split 7" with Light The Fuse and Run. After initial disgust (which remained permanent for many) the LP really grew on me. However, there is no way of getting around it, this record is poo. One of the big mistakes I think they've made is build the songs around the

constant widdly NWOBHM riffs, as opposed to occasionally throwing them in to cool effect. It just sounds cheesy now. It also doesn't help that whilst Billy has one of the best vocals in HC he really can't sing! (On a similar note the guy from Neil Perry doing the backing vocals really needs to shut the fuck up!) This record really does lack the kick this band used to have. I can't help but think they were trying to be original and groundbreaking. Unfortunately it has failed miserably. (Christian)
Level Plane

Hugs The Tarpit LP

'Screamo' has over the last few years become fucking boring. Bands like Orchid and Seatia were great but there are only so many times people can unoriginally rip off good bands. Stupid hair, pretentiousness and style over substance have become the norm. Hugs however are a refreshing breath of fresh air in this tired genre. Musically pretty original, lyrically politically impressive (though I don't know if they have silly hair and tight trousers!). Yeah, this is good shit. (Christian)
Records of the Damned.

I Attack S/T LP

Apparently this is ex-member of Los Crudos. However this record fails to quite grab as much as so many of the Crudos records do. Unsurprisingly it's thrash but it lacks the kick to make an OK record into a great one. (Christian)
A Wrench in The Gears Records

In Arm's Reach S/T 7"

This review was supposed to appear in the last issue, but rancid news' email appears incapable of coping with my pearls of wisdom so here it is, rewritten for y'all to benefit. IAR play fast and furious modern hardcore, not entirely dissimilar to the output of Bridge 9 records in Boston, from the ever-expanding and increasingly exciting Belgian scene. The vocalist has a hellraising scream (like The Hope Conspiracy vocalist being electrocuted) and the music kinda suits it. I think it's awesome. It sounds pretty fresh and new, while still unmistakably being hardcore. "You = Desperate Fuck" is the standout track on this one. The artwork on here is cool too, done by the ubiquitous Mike Bukowski (he's also worked for Comeback Kid and a million others). Check this band out, even though they're seemingly criminally underrated in this country. (Alan)
Anger Management Records (www.am-records.com)

Indicator / Radio Alice No War split 7"

A split 7" from two Leeds based bands, or at least they were Leeds based bands because I think they've now both split up or significantly changed style/ lineup. Anyhow both bands play a similar style of hardcore to each other, though Indicator is slightly thrashier than Radio Alice. Personally I preferred Radio Alice's side and was really digging their song 'four walls', but Indicator was still a good listen! (edd)
Hermit Records, Po Box 309, Leeds, LS2 7AH

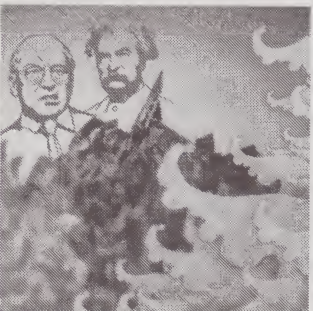
Internal Affairs

This is for you...

These guys fucking thrash it up. I'd be told how amazing this band was but I wasn't expecting this. Awesome hardcore songs, all sub-two minutes, short, sharp and to the point. Sound a little like Terror, but with a bit more of a Negative Approach influence. The only thing that I can complain about is that the lyrics are kinda 'hardcore by numbers' all about 'sell-outs', kids who'll 'never last' and telling friends who've betrayed the vocalist to 'fuck-off'. I guess the lyrics will be cool for when I'm pissed off at the world, for the moment I'm just gonna pay attention to the rad music. (bob)
Malfunction Records - malfunctionrecords.com

The (International) Noise Conspiracy Armed Love

I have no idea what the (I)NC or Dennis Lyxzen for that matter think they are playing at. This is one of those awful moments when you realise someone you have really respected has just sold out and crushed any hope you have ever had. Last time I checked

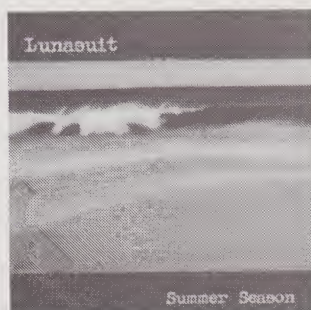


Record Reviews



Dennis was an anarcho-punk who was true to his ideas and included little manifestos for change in his inlays. Now we still have the anarchist and situationist graffiti icons such as 'underneath the pavement the beach,' and 'you make plans, we make history,' references to smashing it up and revolution plastered over this records packaging on top of being in the shape and colours of a black and red anarchist flag. So why the fuck this record includes a song about how we should 'all lets share our dreams under a communist moon,' I have no idea. Or why the whole record sounds like awful pop and bad jazz, over produced rubbish that has had loads of money thrown at it (i.e. a Swedish band being recorded in Hollywood!) I can only imagine it was in the hope of spawning lots of cash. Why, Dennis, why?

(Natalie)
Burning Heart Records



Iskra
S/T
Iskra feature members of Black Kronstadt. Black Kronstadt were an amzing crust HC band with black metal influences, from Canada in the mid-'90s. They had amazing anarchist lyrics, no mere sloganeering, but large tracts doing everything from attacking the NAFTA to explaining how to organise effectively non-hierarchically! Unsurprisingly I was interested to hear this and was most pleasantly surprised when I got this to review instead of most of the normal crap! Anyhoo, Iskra have certainly run with the black metal influences of their predecessors. This is straight up anarchist black metal! They also do a cover of the best Dylan song 'Masters of War'. (Christian)
Profane Existence



J Church
Society is a Carnivorous Flower
J Church are a pretty cool power-pop band somewhat in the vein of Weezer. I mean they're not the most spectacular band in the world, and they're certainly overshadowed by most of the rest of the No Idea roster, all the same I enjoyed listening to their CD the few times I felt adequate to review this. I'm not sure I'll listen to it in the near future. I'm thinking of giving it to my mum (that's not the slight on the band as it might look - she likes good music from the 70s and I think she'd dig this!). (edd)
No Idea Records

The Je Ne Sais Quoi
Secret Language EP
Oooh, this is pretty sounding. Great indie rock that's fresh, funky and rhythmic.
The fluorescent orange and pink packaging had me fooled for a moment though as I was expecting Shoreditch twat-esque electro pap. Luckily it was just a disguise for this little gem. Thank goodness for that. (Natalie)
Coalition



Johnny Panic
You're A Fool
This is a nasty, nasty, nasty, nasty, nasty EP. Crunchy distortion is no disguise for bad pop-punk and this just stinks of third generation wannabe pop-punk. I have no desire to listen to this. In fact I'm gonna make this review as short as this four track EP. Nasty. (Geoff)
Barking Dog Music

Justice
Look Alive (EP)
I so wanted this record to be amazing. This band totally blew me away when they first came over from Belgium in January and their "Breakout" demo was one of the coolest demos I'd ever heard. Retarded as fuck vocals over stop-starting, part fast stagedivin' hardcore punk, part stompin' mosh hardcore in a style that is now called Lockin' Out (after the label that brought us Mental, Righteous Jams, etc, etc). Unfortunately the demo tracks tagged on the end are undoubtedly the best on this MCD. The new material sounds pretty stale in comparison. They appear to have the lost some of the wacky, what-the-fuck, unpredictable raw energy that made them so awesome in the first place in favour of a more midpaced, safe version of themselves. The songwriting sounds a little rushed, which is odd cos I would have thought they took much longer on this than they did the demo, but whatever. I

can get into some of the tracks, like "Some People" and "Light in the Dark", but I usually end up skipping to "2...3...JUSTICE!!!" In their defence, they still fucking smash it live, as anyone who was at The Verge when they supported Mental will testify, and more importantly, I'm quite sure they don't give a fuck what I think and neither should you, really. (Alan)
Dead and Gone Records (www.deadandgone.co.uk)

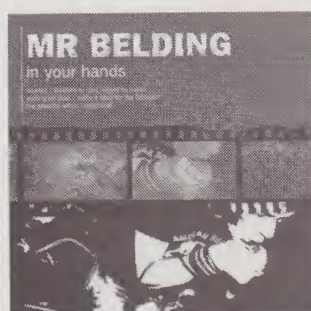
Kriegstanz
S/T 10"
Members of Seein' Red and Barnhouse Effect playing heavy brutal HC (cue inevitable comparisons to His Hero Is Gone, Tragedy et al) and it is predictably very good! As good as the Yank bands doing this kind of thing. On the great Opiate Records who are constantly bringing us the finest of the Dutch scene! (Christian)
Opiate Records

Lamb of God
Ashes of the Wake
This took a while to sink in for me. On first listen I felt the songs were missing something, that they didn't quite work. Regardless, after a few more spins everything clicked and we've got another quality metal album on our hands. What sets this apart from others for me is the really short sharp riffs, they're like machine gun blasts (especially when syncopated with the bass drums) and I love Blythe's guttural yet powerful vocals...it sounds like he's stirring something deep within him. No idea what he's growling about unfortunately, as no lyric sheet is provided, BOOO!!! A fine metal album then, I've just realized how much metal I've reviewed for this issue, carumba. (mikey)

Leftover Crack
Fuck World Trade
With an album cover like this it could only be Leftover Crack. This has been a long time coming (as they remind us, the "tower topping Mediocre Generica" came out on 9/11/01) and I'm sure many people were curious as to what they would come up with. The answer is an album that is a lot more varied than Mediocre Generica, and the mix of death metal, ska and punk feels a lot less clumsy this time around. Its obvious loads of thought and time went into this and I really enjoyed the use of strings and pianos on some songs (i.e. "Life is Pain") it adds to the "epic" feel about this album. The lyrics are fantastic, spewing scorn on the police, the government's hypocrisy, Iraq, Clear Channel, religion, over-population, the prison system, those fuckers at the IMF and World Bank. A confrontational, nihilistic album with great tunes and a lot to say. (mikey)
Household Name Records

Le Tigre
This Island
There have been lots of raised eyebrows from the punk underground flying around about the move of this political and iconic band to a major label. This is a way more poppy, synth loaded Le Tigre than I've ever been used to with electro crowd pleasing dance tunes. They are still having lots of feminist fun but they have lost their raw punky edge and become more rounded. The message is there but the beauty of songs like 'Hot Topic' and 'FYR' I sense are slipping and the days of the pure anger and fury of 'Bang! Bang!' are long gone but what they are doing now is still equally worthy of jumping up and down to. (Natalie)
Universal Records

Lord Belial
The Seal Of Belial
The press release for this album claims that LB are equally accessible to both fans of modern and classic black metal. Well I'm a fan of Bathory and Celtic Frost and this holds no interest for me so I'm gonna just come to the conclusion that all the little kiddies with their COF and Bal Saagoth Teeshirts will be rushing out to buy this record. Any 1394 fans buying this record? Doubt it, they actually have taste. Anyway shall I conclude? This is nothing more than and over produced (Regain and their mega bucks again) at black metal. I don't like it but as always make up your own opinion. (Geoff)
Regain Records



everything for some

A Thought Refused



Everything For Some from Andover deliver their blisteringly charged politically hardcore rock on the unexpected world. Taking the anger of Will Haven, the riffage of Helmet and the infectiousness of Rage Against The Machine, EFS have blended this into 'A Thought Refused' their ten track debut, something thunderous and unique.

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www.everythingforsome.com

Bait

Anatomy Of Disaster



Bait, the current incarnation of savage sewer-punks Deviated Instinct who crawled like a chest-burster from the rotting carcass of UK punk in 1984. Dark, abrasive, twisted hardcore punk with a metal edge and some of the most infected vocals ever. 'Anatomy Of Disaster' is their debut nine track onslaught on the world. - £7 ppd (see site for overseas price)

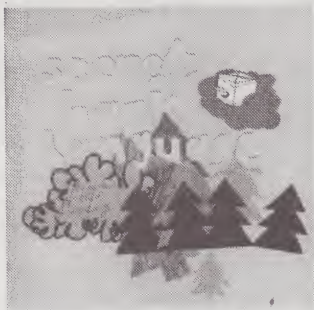


www.thebaitvoid.com



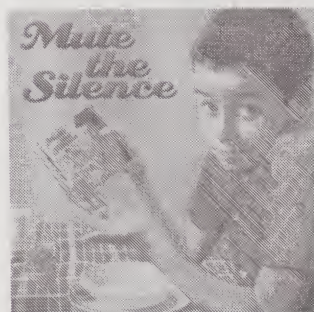
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Record Reviews



Los Destructos/Alliance Split 7"

There is one thing which I always hate when having to review records. You are almost guaranteed that among every batch of records there will be one which you can appreciate is passionate, DIY, political but musically just isn't your cup of tea. This is that record for this issue. If you like 'melodic punk' (what a crap description - Los Destructos have apparently toured with Ex-Cathedra and Machine Gun Etiquette). I reckon if you like that kind of stuff you'll gain some measure of satisfaction from this. (Christian)



The Lost

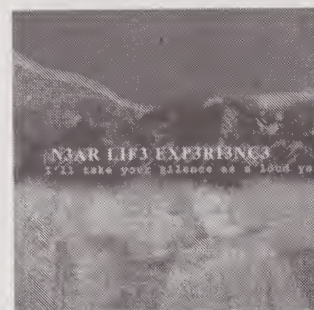
Hidden Beneath The Shadows Of Fear

Lifeforce have become very hit and miss lately. The Lost are certainly a case of missing the target by a mile. If this was 1999 The Lost would be called nu-metal, today however they're probably lucky enough to sneak into Metallic Hardcore. Regardless of the label you want to give this band's music it's weak and boring. There is no drive behind the guitars and the songs go nowhere. They just kinda proceed along at this half dead tempo, never build up to anything, and just fizzle out. The guitar riffs and licks are equally uninspiring, the drumming pitiful and I can't even hear a bass guitar at all. This is a substandard release, it's not even worthy of being called mediocre. (Geoff) Lifeforce

Lunasuit

Summer Season

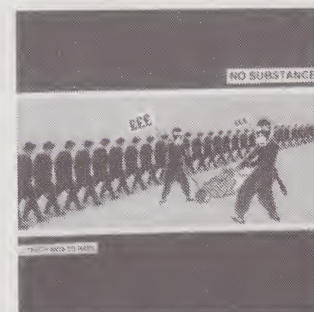
For a Boss Tuneage release this record packs more punch than I would expect. The first couple of seconds of music I heard after putting on the CD actually made me interested, reasonably paced guitars and a not bad riff, but of course once the singing started anything good and worthy of praise on this album was drowned out by high pitched 'angst ridden' (yeah right!) vocals. I have no time for such sterile crap and such archetypal vocals are the easiest way to turn me off a record. If you've read my reviews you'll have noticed just how harsh I come down on bands with bad vocals. It's punk, it's supposed to be angry and raw and aggressive but instead so many bands feel the need to stray into Busted and McFly territory. I remember a few years ago how people always used to tote slogans like 'death to false metal', is it time for slogans like 'death to false punk'? (Geoff) Boss Tuneage



Mad Caddies

Live From Toronto: Songs in the Key of EH

There's the general rule of thumb that live records are badly recorded, and generally a way for bands to pretend they're releasing something new, whilst they desperately try and write some new songs. The live albums that Fat is putting out at the moment seems to be breaking this mould since they've all been well arranged and well recorded, and the Mad Caddies live CD isn't an exception. I haven't listened to the Mad Caddies for a couple of years now. I kind of got bored in them, but listening to this reminded me why I used to like them. Goofy songs, with cool horn parts and a really danceable beat. It's not something I'm gonna be listening to much, but if you're into that kind of goofy ska-punk then this is one of the best of the bunch. (edd) Fat Wreck Chords



Malkovich S/t CD

Another Malkovich CD and another realease of their's on Coalition. Coalition like this band which is a good thing because I like this band too and I have a very high opinion of Coalition releases in terms of quality (proving that DIY doesn't necessarily mean crap). There are 10 tracks on his CD (*raves*) of nice thrashy hard rockin' rock on this CD and although it only clocks in at just over 16 minutes I'm thrilled to bits about this release. What more could I personally want. I thought the Foundation Rocks was a good record but this is that and much, much more. The songs are fast, exciting, dynamic, and refreshingly fresh. This is a really, really good record and I love getting CDs like this one to review. (Geoff) Coalition Records

Malkovich

A Criminal Record

Weird. Didn't Malkovich only just release a record on Coalition, I remember Geoff writing a really bad review of it recently? Oh well I'm not going to complain since Malkovich are fucking amazing, and the more they release the better. This is trashy, discordant rock n roll at it's best. Seriously I can't think of anything to criticise the band on, even the artwork is near perfect. Great release. (edd) Reflections Records

Midtown

Forget What you know

As you would expect this is a complete piece of shit, and it's not even worth me bothering to review it. If you like crap saccharine sweet pop about how some rich, white American thirty year olds lack any social skills and can't get over what happens in real life then go listen to this. If you like good music then I'd go listen to something else. (bob) I don't know, I don't care...

The Mingers

Universal Disarmament

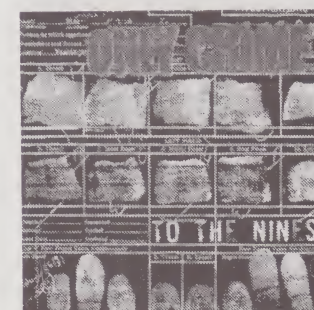
Fast and furious punk rock from Leeds, this band doesn't fuck about. The sound and meaning are pretty simple; anti-violence and anti-prejudice politics. The Mingers are anti- and confrontational over just about everything out there that's bad, but given the state of the world right now they've got some pretty important messages. (Natalie) Peter Bower Records, Po Box 132, Leeds, LS6 2RR, UK

Modern Life is War European Tour 7"

Ok I admit it: there's nothing at all new on this record. It's merely a re-release of their 7" which came out in 2001 (I think). Minus the track "Clarity" of course, which found its way onto their full length "My Love My Way", which is simply one of the best fucking records I've ever heard. So good in fact that it's really hard for me to describe it, other than regurgitating the classic hardcore compliments: "packed full of intensely emotional music with honest, anthemic lyrics, etc, etc". Let's just say that the first time I heard it, and more or less every time thereafter, that record left me feeling convinced that shit was gonna change for me. Something in the vocalist's intense style and personal and positive lyrics really strikes a chord with me. There's no doubt that he fucking means it. The 7" is actually quite different to the album, going for a more rocky hardcore punk sound, owing certain influence to early-mid 80s Black Flag. I actually kinda prefer the vocals on the 7" since, like the music, they're less controlled and his voice actually breaks at various points, whereas on the album he's developed his sound into more of a gruff bark. Whatever, if you saw this band in June/July, you'll have bought this 7" (and their album), you'll have two-stepped to "Destination: Death or Better Days" and screamed your lungs out during "First and Ellen". If you didn't, you already suck, but help is at hand by buying the damn album and watching it change your life. (Alan) Reflections Records

Motorhead Inferno

I think for me reviewing Motorhead is going to be a hard task. When I was first getting into metal I was listening to a whole load of shit but after a while I became a big fan of Iron Maiden and Motorhead and for me these two bands became a sort of bench mark. Equally so must I now judge Motorhead on their earlier releases (seems obvious doesn't it!) but of course I was hoping for an amzing release. Do be honest I don't know if they've got it here for my vision is clouded and I have trouble seeing this album for what it really is over what I want it to be. I will say however that this album doesn't strike me in quite the way their earlier stuff does, but wether or not that means they've produced a substandard record or my music tastes are moving (but I've remained a sentimental old fool) I can only guess. (Geoff) SPV Records



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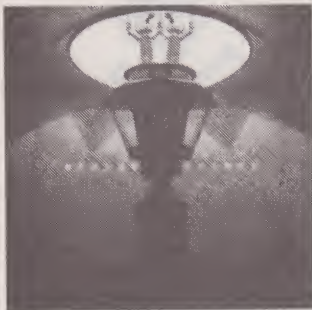
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Record Reviews



Mr Belding In your Hands

Well first of all, props for having a cool name, the more references to cool 80's things (see also Biff Tannen) the better. There's some cool ideas going on in this, its really fast and punky and despite slowing down and getting a bit more atmospheric at points, it doesn't get too cheesy. And yes it does the shouty vocals and singing thing, but again, it doesn't grate. Nice metallic influence on some of the guitar parts too, in fact, I really like this. Its one of those records where you can tell a band's influences yet knowing that they're not complete carbon copies of those bands. Ooh name drop time. Well, when listening to this I kinda got a vibe of a more "shiny" Freaks Union with elements of Jet v Sharks as well. Good stuff! (mikey)
Hollow Soul records



The Murder of Rosa Luxemburg Secret Bark Language

I listened to their first 7" before putting this on just to see how much they'd changed. It's like listening to two different bands. It's very strange. The equally weird thing is that both 7"s are really fucking good in their own way. So here we have Murder of... playing mellow, but discordant, 'artistic' hardcore. Despite it sounding really pretentious it's more about music, and the feeling that it gives you sonically, than it is about songs. When I saw them after they'd changed their set from the familiar faster stuff I was concerned that they were just going to become terrible, but they've actually managed to turn into something really awesome. I really liked the little inlay book you get with the 7" too! (edd)

This is a Portable Record,
portablerecords@hotmail.com



Napalm Death Leaders Not Followers 2

This is not the sort of album that I expect from the band who surely must be recognised and the driving force in grindcore. Allow me to illustrate. With covers of bands like Cryptic Slaughter, Anti-Cimex, Discharge and Hrax, Napalm Death have managed to create a crust/thrash album as opposed to a decent grind album. Interestingly for the most part they've just done fairly bland covers. The cover of Sepultura's 'Troops Of Doom' is so closed to the original it's uncanny. I won't say this album is a bad album because it's not, in fact all of the covers are done well. It's just that this is a huge disappointment. Had this been a grind album I would have loved it but the grind just isn't there. Shame. (Geoff)
Century Media



Near Life Experience I'll Take Your Silence As A Loud Yes

For one I would like to lambast this band for their stupid name and overly contrived album name. Also did they actually think it was cool and stylish to write ever e in their name as a 3 (the observant among you will notice that I've done the band a favourite and corrected all their spelling mistakes). The music in this album isn't much better. Personally I thought nu-metal had died off but apparently not and we have NLE to prove it. I actually can't believe a record label has been dumb enough to sign this band. OK, yes I'm being harsh but it needs to be said. This is trash and to their this band will go. (Geoff)
Cool Kid Records



Nomatrix Induce Vomiting

Without wanting to seem trite, I think the album title might be a self fulfilling prophecy. This is *not* good! Musically it's OK, well it's at least inoffensive, standard three chord stuff. The vocals though are fucking horrible. The first problem is them being too high in

the mix, which I guess is not strictly speaking the band's fault. But even if they were slightly lower they'd still be horrible and whining. It's annoying I wanted to like this, it looked like it might have been good! (edd)
nomatrixpunk@hotmail.com

No Substance Teach The Kids to Hate

So I recently moved flats. Like most people moving flats means packing up at the last minute, chucking everything you can see into any available box/ bag/ whatever and hoping you get everything. This review CD is one the things that didn't make it (I scanned it in before I moved!). But I did listen to it a few times. From the best of my memory it was pretty rad hardcore (in the vein of Good Riddance et al.) from the SouthCoast. I'm pretty sure they're worth checking out. (edd)
Milliepeedrecords@hotmail.com

October File A Long Walk on a Short Pier

This is ok. Kinda technical boozy rock meets heartbroken art students. The sound is pretty clean and well-produced, so I'm wondering if this record is saved by good production? However, there is some really good drumming on this which makes it infectious, as well as the fact that the lyrics to 'God Hates America' completely changed my opinion of the intentions they had. (On first glance I shuddered at the prospect of listening to another whiny band procrastinating about distrust, battered and confused emotions... you get the drift... instead there was a valiant attempt at alerting the listeners to genocide and deception in the mass media nestled amongst fast instrumentals. Shame there isn't more!) (12-oh-5)

Golf Records

Off Minor Innominate LP

Second LP from the Off Minor camp. The first 'un is a classic and this one ain't half bad either! It is darker than 'The Heat Death of the Universe' and has more jazzy bits (this is a good thing!). I haven't listened to this enough yet to decide if I think it's better than the first LP. Either way you would have to be a bit 'Dubya' not to pick this up. (Christian)
EarthWaterSkyConnection/Level Plane

Only Crime To The Nines

So these guys are made up of lots of other American punk/ hardcore bands like Good Riddance and the like. I was pretty sceptical about this, assuming it was just some crappy side project that a few of them had busted out in their spare time, but it turns out this is a 'proper' band doing tours and the like. Musically it sounds like Good Riddance or Rise Against or any of the other political hardcore bands that is on Fat at the moment. It's pretty good. Well worth checking out if you're into this style of music. (edd)
Fat Wreck

Orange Island The Morning After

There's that old adage about not judging a book by its cover. I guess I should have paid attention to that and not assumed that this was a metallic hardcore band because of their cover. What you get is an adequate emo band instead. It's not too whiny, or melodramatic, but at the same time these guys don't really have the passion, and angst, that make so many emo bands essential listening. Average. (bob)
Rise Records, Po Box 135, Roseberg, OR 97470

Orca The Days Are Restless... But The Nights Are Explosive

A little throw away five track EP of bad emo. Come to think of it all emo is bad so ORCA by default are a load of badness in CD form. Hellnation had the right idea by calling their 5", 'At War With Emo' and at this moment I'm about ready to call in a bombstrike (no pun intended). I'm really suffering tonight. The last couple of records I've reviewed have all be rubbishy emo and I'm not enjoying this at all. I wouldn't even recommend this record to my worst enemy. No wait, actually I would because my enemies are worthy of suffering and this is surely the quickest way to mental breakdown. (Geoff)



Casket Music

Record Reviews

Paint the Town Red Home is Where the Hate is

I haven't been overly impressed the few times that I've caught Paint the Town Red live. They never really grabbed me in the same way that other bands do. Their record is better, though they still have the problem of sounding a little bit too much like the Hope Conspiracy for their own good. All the same it's not a bad record, it's certainly something that I listen to fairly regularly even if it is slightly generic.

Join The Team Player Records

Phoenix Foundation We Need To Make Some Changes EP

So if you thought Finland only had the Rasmus to offer then you might want to pick this up and think again. These guys aren't the greatest band ever to play, but they certainly write some infectious (and enjoyable) melodic punk songs. I think the songs on this EP are the best that they've so far written, and the band seem like really nice guys, and I think that you should try and pick this up if you can! (bob)

Newest Industry

Pilger These Times EP

Who ever thought it was a good idea to press this 7" onto red and black vinyl is a fucking genius! Pilger – for those not familiar – play late eighties style hardcore with angry, politicised lyrics. I really enjoy listening to them, and Phil's lyrics. It's also cool having some new material from them to listen to since it's been ages since the 'Silence' EP came out! Well worth trying to get hold of. (edd)

Peter Bower Records, Po Box 132, Leeds, LS6 2RR, UK

Pilger / Biff Tannen Split 7"

New material from both SouthCoast bands. I think this might be the last material that Biff Tannen have recorded cause I've heard they're splitting up now they're at uni. Biff Tannen play their standard thrashy hardcore railing against consumerism, racism and how cool the South Coast is. Pilger takes the more old school route, playing late eighties style youth crewesque hardcore, but with similarly angry lyrics as Biff Tannen. (bob)

SD Records, Po Box 295, Southampton, SO17 1LW, www.suspectdevicehq.co.uk

Planes Mistaken For Stars Up In Them Guts

A friend of mine came over the other day and was surprised that I had not one but three Planes Mistake For Stars poster adorning the walls of my sitting room. 'I just thought you didn't like this stuff' she said when I gave her the 'I can't believe you don't understand how fucking amazing/important this band are'. Planes are seriously one of my favourite bands around at the moment. Playing pure rock n roll punk, with passion and amazing musicianship. This is so far one of the best albums released this year. (edd)

No Idea Records

PN The Art of Being "We"

Edd: "reading press release" "Passionate, intense and emotional hardcore from one of Belgium's most dedicated bands" ...you heard of 'em??

Me: Nah...you??

Edd: No...you're reviewing this

Me: Ah Christ...

Apparently this band's been going 12 years. I kinda suspect that in 2000 their press release deemed them "passionate, intense and emotional *nu metal* from Belgium", since they seem to be a pretty clearcut case of bandwagon-jumping. Nothing here remotely suggests hardcore (or emo for that matter) whatsoever, not in the slightest. They sound like a hungover Deftones jamming with Tool with that bloke from Queens of the Stone Age singing lyrics by Trent Reznor, if you can picture that. I guess that's fine if that's what you're into, but don't call it hardcore or else Raybeez will come back from the dead one night and cut you open right there in your Korn pyjamas. (Alan)

Life Sentence Records (<http://www.lifesentencerecords.com>)

The Profits Discography '99-'04

I've been reading Erica Profits' column in MRR for a very long time now, but never felt the need to check out her band. I just assumed they'd be your standard crusty, political punk band who sings about things that Crass sang about back in '81. Man I was so wrong. These guys surpass all expectations. They are in short absolutely fucking AMAZING. Seriously this is really inspiring, uplifting, and generally makes me feel happier about the world knowing that at least there are some people in the world who believe similar things to me and is also able to make really awesome music around it. Plus this is also really cheap cause it's been put out in a proper DIY way. Seriously pick this up, I can't overemphasise just how good this is! (edd)

Active Distribution

Raein/Funeral Diner Split 7"

Woohoo! Good record. Raein are from Italy and had a really good LP put out last year which I really need to listen to more. Good ???? style hardcore. I am amazed by Funeral Diner. I completely fail to understand how they manage to work full time, play in other bands, tour a hell of a lot AND put out so many releases, all of which are fucking good! Nice packaging as well. If you like the 'emo' (after years of saying it I still hate this description!) end of the DIY HC spectrum then you won't go far wrong picking this up. (Christian)

Red Cars Go Faster

Ramones Adios Amigos and Acid Eaters

Reissues of two of the later Ramones LPs. Come on, it hardly needs a description. I guess for most people the first couple of LPs or that pretty decent 'Anthology' CD would be enough, so I guess this is for the completist Ramone fan. (Christian)

Captain Oi

Ramones Brain Drain and Mondo Bizarro

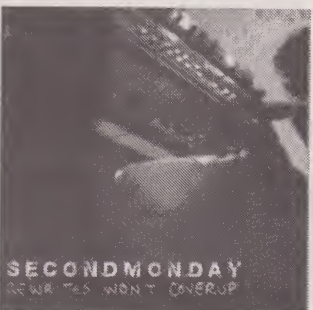
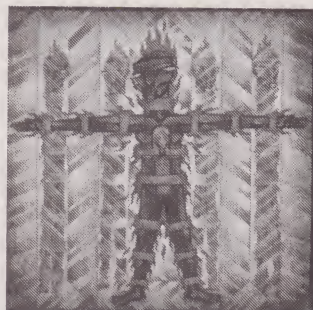
I'm not going to bother giving both of these CD's their own reviews because I'm going to say the same thing for each. Further more I'm sure everyone knows what the Ramones are like and so I don't feel that I have to elaborate too much on what the music is like on these two CDs. Originally put out in 89 and 90 respectively this is hardly early era Ramones and are not the albums for which they are famous. They are, however, good albums and you won't find me slating the Ramones but, and this is an opinion I hold in general and from which very few bands are exempt, the Ramones not being one of these, and hence the reason for so many subordinate clauses in one sentence that, a band can only keep up the energy, and excitement from their early records for such and such and such a time before becoming old and tired. These two albums are enjoyable but not amazing and they do feel a little tired. (Geoff)

Captain Oi

Red Lights Flash Free

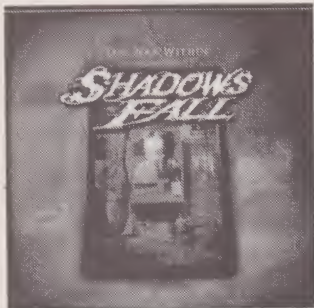
Now this is hard for me to review. These guy's released one of my favourite punk/hardcore albums in "...and time goes by", mainly because it challenged me and didn't sound like a conventional "punk" band, so I've been waiting for the follow up for a LONG time. On first listen I was admittedly disappointed, I felt that the music wasn't as dynamic or "different" as it once was, and that the production had made the songs less atmospheric. However, after a few listens it started to sink in a bit more, and the songs still retain what I liked about Red Lights Flash (namely cool guitar parts and fantastic vocals and drumming). I was just expecting to be blown away, and instead it's been a bit more of a subtle "build up" for me to get into songs. This is still a hell of a lot better than most bands out there today, and songs like "Politics of Hate" and "Your Waywardness" remind me why I love this band so much. I think this is gonna just take me a few more listens to appreciate the more "streamlined" direction they've taken. (mikey)

A-F records





Record Reviews



Refused The EP Comp CD

Ah yes, I *knew* there was an advantage to me joining the RN team, and here it is: a free Refused CD. Awesome. Yeah so not much to say on this one: it's Refused, everyone knows how they sound and if they don't, you're an idiot and you really should. It has a bunch of classics, from "Circle Pit" to "Refused Are Fucking Dead" to, of course, "New Noise". The latter, incidentally, was the first hardcore song I ever heard and the feeling it gave me is utterly indescribable. The angriest, fastest and most urgent piece of fuck-you punk rock I'd ever heard, and it was fuckin' catchy too. From that moment on, I knew that I was gonna be a hardcore kid. Refused really are overlooked by far too many people in terms of classic hardcore. However, what's with this re-release shizzle?? Was I wrong in believing that Refused's final communiqué categorically ruled out any re-releases?? Who's doing this, is it Dennis Lyxzen (vocalist), the rest of the band or Burning Heart?? I'm confused. Ah well, all I know is look out for Refused's entire discography being re-released in the near future. "The Shape of Punk to Come" is already out I believe. (Alan)

Rehasher Off Key Melodies

Holy fuck! Rehasher is Roger from Less than Jake and 3 guys from other Gainesville playing super fast poppy skate punk, and it ROCKS! I've always loved Roger's vocals, and this really reminds me of when Less than Jake used to write great songs with amazing hooks and vocal harmonies, its just loads of fun and has made me grin like an idiot every time I've listened to them. Songs about growing up, staying yourself, coping with everyday life. Oh man, its like discovering punk and ska for the first time, woo! Seriously, buy this over any pop punk album you were considering, I'm pretty sure its better than any of them. (mikey)

No idea records

Richard Cheese I'd Like a Virgin

Well this is exactly what I would never have expected to be reviewing. It's actually pretty hilarious to listen to, and this is just the censored version. Think of a lounge room singer doing cheesy Jazz covers of Snoop Dogg, Outkast, Kelis, Slayer etc. I really don't know how to explain it other than that. It's just so stupid and over the top without resorting to being gratuitous or crass. The inlay has invited me to enter a competition to win a chance to stalk Richard Cheese. I think that sums up this album best. This is just a load of nonsense really but that doesn't stop it from being funny or enjoyable. (Geoff)

Idea Town

Rise And Fall Hellmouth

It just wouldn't be an issue of RN without at least one American [uhh they're not American you fool - edd] hardcore band, following the trend of bands playing 'tuff' old school, finding itself in the review pages. This isn't a bad album but those who know me know that I like my hardcore thrashy, fast, and almost incomprehensible and as a result I've always had a hard time trying to connect with this more mid-tempoed hardcore and to see it for what it really is. I like and enjoy bands like The Terror but I don't see them as the amazing entity that almost everyone else in hardcore seems to see them, and so here I'm going to say that my opinion isn't necessarily valid. That's seams a very long winded way for me to say that I'm not impressed with this album and I do think in fairness that this album lacks that indescribable element that some records possess which upon hearing you are instantly stunned and left in torpor, possessing only the ability to drop your lower jaw. Perhaps that's just a long winded way to say this record doesn't stand out. (Geoff)

Join The Team Player Records

River City Rebels Hate to be Loved

Shitty, terrible, over produced attempt at swingy soul punk with a picture of their ugly as fuck lead singer getting a blow job off 3 girls on the front cover and inside band pics of all the members (with their oh so nice tattoos and punk rock haircuts) lounging about

smugly whilst "pretty" half naked girls drape over them...if you like sexist shit music then by all means buy this. (mikey)

Victory records

Salem Love it or leave it

Somewhere in the back of my mind I know that Salem has ex-members of an emo band that I really like, but for the life of me I can't remember who it is! Salem doesn't need the 'featuring ex-members of...' though since in their own right they're really fucking good. There should be more emo bands of this calibre. (bob)

Fiddler Records

Sense Of Purpose Tomorrow's Too Late

Described as 'Australian, dual vocal, youth crew attack. Essential anthems for a positive youth. Like Youth Of Today meets Ensign.' Well I'm not entirely convinced of the Ensign link (though I kind of see where they're coming from) it otherwise does exactly what it says on the label. It's cool getting a release from so far away as well, and it to still be awesome! (bob)

Go Team Records, 61 Northern Road, Swindon, SN2 1PD

Sextodecimo

The Banshee Screams for Buffalo Meat

First of all, AMAZING fucking EP title!!! The fun doesn't stop there as the artwork is full of pics of fat people and porn arranged in a "Victorian traveling freak show" style, and the whole thing gives off the vibe that the people who made it are pretty deranged and scary. The music continues this by being a sludgy wall of doomy noise with some guy screaming over the top, and its AWESOME. There are moments of more restrained post-rock fun, but not even these can escape from the huge, fuzzy sabbath-esque riffs which come bludgeoning in like a stone(d) elephant. I really, really like this, it gives me the same vibe as when I saw Hey Colossus!, and makes me want to sit in my room, writing on the walls with my blood, and then rock back and forth in a ball gibbering insanely. For those who like things heavy and scary. (mikey)

Shadows Fall The War Within

Now THIS is the stuff I've been looking for. The rise in popularity of bands incorporating old school metal influences is a pretty heartening thing, and with this record I think Shadow's Fall have set the standard for all other bands to follow. "The Art of Balance" was a great record, but I feel this surpasses that, as it just a brilliant mix of old school thrash, power metal, Gothenburg-death and hardcore. You can tell these guys just love to play metal, and have been fans for so long that they KNOW what works and what doesn't. The amount of times I grinned and flicked the horns whilst listening to this doesn't bear thinking about, everything just sounds right. The small touches like acoustic guitars to open the album, the harmonised solos, the double bass (!!!!!!!!!), the mixture of vocal styles, its all just so awesome. If you're going to buy any metal album at the moment, buy this. You will not regret it. (mikey)

Century media

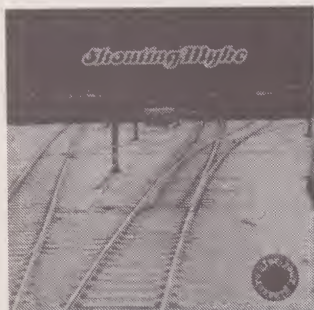
Shikari/Phoenix Bodies Split 7"

Nice 7". Shikari are Dutch which, if you are aware of the calibre of the Dutch DIY scene, you will know is always a good start. Brutal HC like a faster Acme, with intelligent political lyrics. They are meant to be absolutely amazing live but as their van broke down on the way to their London show a couple of years ago I can't comment. Phoenix Bodies are not as good musically (though they are certainly not bad!) but do have nice lyrics, esp. on the track about the internet. (Christian)

The Electric Human Project

Shuriken Evacuate/Disintergrate

Music like this actually has the power to make me homicidal. I think it's the high pitched vocals that make me want to grab the singer and physically drop his balls. This hurts to just listen to - it's the equivalent of having a bat scream into your ear. Hurts, doesn't it. I



stalefish 1
seashells bottles & broken fences





Record Reviews

wonder if this band think they're being creative by creating something so archetypal as this CD. It really is the most abysmal drivel and I feel all the worse for having to listen to this. It's even worse that I've been reviewing CDs for over an hour now and just as I'm ready to go to bed and enjoy some quiet away from this terrible pop-punk crap that I discover that I still have a few more CDs to review. I think this must be Reality's way of making sure it gets in a parting shot before I abandon it for 10 hours of temporary oblivion. (Geoff)

Your And Whose Army Records

The Squatters From The Shadows

This is more like it. Noisy and riotous crusty punk. I'm quite enjoying this. Even though I realise that this is nothing special it is much much better than most of the stuff I've had to review this issue and as a result it's a breath of fresh air. If this is one of the better CDs I've had to listen to then I can only conclude that the state of popular music today is as great as John Major's sweaty y-fronts. Again I'm being harsh and the band to whom this review is dedicated is receiving the brunt of this. Just as people like to refer to either the Conservative or Labour as being the better of two evils. This really is the worse of two big steaming piles of crap. And that means that it is still a big steaming pile of crap. Did they really think that reactionary lyrics about how much they hate townies and shouting 'fuck the media' would really cut it? (Geoff)

Self Release

Snowblood The Human Tragedy

Snowblood are pretentious arty nonsense. Remember Miocene? Well Snowblood are best seen as the successor to overblown atmospheric nu-metal and are actually less creative than Miocene. At least the latter managed to mix in something different onto their EPs. Snowblood's attempt, however, at generating a menacing and dark atmosphere just seems to drag the songs on for far too long and so by the end of it your bored out to your fucking mind. If you want dark experimental music turn to hardcore where a plethora of bands, Circles Takes The Square, His Hero Is Gone, Darkest Hour, and Majority Rule to name but a few, are making great leaps and bounds into the realm of progressive music and certainly the four bands I have just mentioned wipe the floor of such dull, turgid, and abysmal releases as this one here. (Geoff)

Superfi Records

Social Distortion Sex, Love and Rock 'n' Roll

I watched 'Another State Of Mind' for the first time the other day. It was weird seeing Mike Ness as a young kid. I wonder what he would think of the adult that's still playing in a band called Social Distortion? I suppose one of the problems that I have with it is that it's not that far removed from 'Mommy's Little Monster'. Oh well it's still an enjoyable listen with the usual blue infused punk rock, which I guess Social D are famous for, but it doesn't quite have the teeth, or the danger that old Social D records seemed to have, and that Ness embodies in 'Another State of Mind'. (edd)

Kung Fu Records

SORB Germ Attack

Anarcho punk/ hardcore band in the vein of Conflict or Discharge. Musically nearer Discharge, lyrically Conflict. You got songs about BNP being scum, going out and doing direct action, about how fucked the media is etc. etc. It should be pretty awesome but it isn't. After twelve songs of really similar sounding songs I got pretty bored, and I kind of prefer lyrics which just have a hint of subtlety about them. They're not a bad band at what they do, it's just what they do is something that doesn't really interest me (and I'm perplexed why an anarcho band copyrighted their music!). (edd)

Active Distribution (see ad)

The Start Initiation

I think Aimee Echo is trying to be sexy with her vocals but it just sounds monotonous. A little in the vein of the Yeah, Yeah, Yeahs, but with nowhere near the energy or NME 'in crowd' backing, this 'punk' offering

from an ex (nu)metal queen fails to impress. I mean come on, for someone to exclaim, "We're a punk band. We used to work for a big corporation, but now we work for you," has got to be a little misinformed about what being punk means.

(Natalie)

Nitro Records

State of Fear Discography

OK so its come out on Profane Existence, it has skulls and guns on the front cover, and the lead singer got dreads. You already know this is going to sound crust as fuck. And these guys are good too. Really fast, really passionate and cool lyrics. Two thumbs up. (bob)

Profane Existence, Po Box 8722, Minneapolis, MN 55408, USA

Stars Are Falling How many eyes have opened

Fairly standard metalcore here. It's alright but it's really nothing to get too worked up about. (edd)

starsarefalling.com

Street Trash Five Dirty Fingers 7"

So a picture of a dick, cumming, whilst riding a skateboard plus the name should give you a pretty good indication of what this band is gonna sound like. Retarded thrashy hardcore, two songs belong to Street Trash and then they ripped off Don't Need It by Bad Brains just for good measure! (edd)

My War Records

Submerge Riot, Here, Now!

There isn't anything glaringly wrong with this record, I just found it kind of boring, so I can't be bothered to write a decent review of it. (12-oh-5)

Swamp Room Life is Short... & Wide

To the untrained eye this is a demo. It comes on a CDR, its name is written in by black marker, and it has a black and white photocopied slip of paper for an inlay. But no, as the additional slip of A7 paper inside informs me this is because the point of this record release was to encourage the copying and distribution of records in the spirit of 'reclaiming the punk.' It's an interesting concept and I'm sure there are some who would say this was just a demo you could copy but whatever, its still very DIY which is cool. The music through is a series of synth, experimental technical fuzzy noise and instrumentals which aren't really that sophisticated and don't seem to lead anywhere. Full marks for effort though lads but unfortunately you haven't quite reached Godspeed! You Black Emperor or Mogwi levels of brilliance just yet!

(Natalie)

No Mates Records

Tat Peace Sex & Tea, Bloodstain, Live For Rock

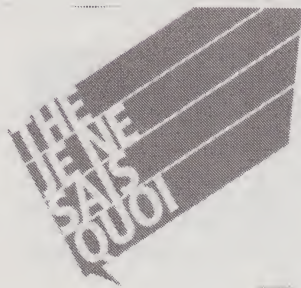
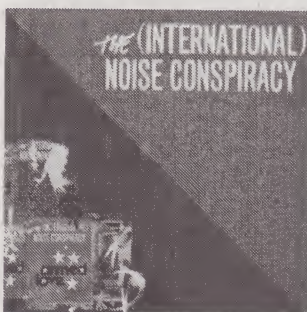
You know you're dealing with creative heavy weights when you get a record which is named after all three songs on it. They really must be asking for it be calling their band Tat and writing music this bad - I'm really putting in a lot of effort to not go all out with the most obvious of comments. Is this emo? I have trouble working it out because the guy on the front cover has long metal head hair but this music is just so weak and the 'ba-ba-bada' in the background can't have anything to do with metal, can it? And oh dear the track Bloodstain has a ska-tempo in it. Oh God I want to cry. Really, those people that think that up strokes are a good idea should be stapled to the wall by their shoulder blades, have their feet skinned, and left to bleed to death. OK, I'm being very harsh and I don't actually want to hurt anyone (I'm a pussy cat deep down) but listening to this actually causes me pain. (Geoff)

EX Records

Tiamat Prey

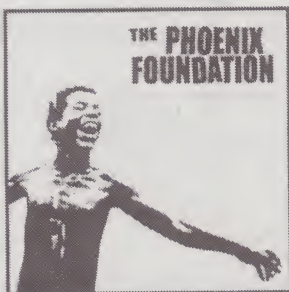
Can anyone explain Gothic Rock to me? Am I being stupid or is it really just overblown shit from a bunch of pretentious bands who think that trying to be mysterious and 'out there' is a good way to market

THE ENABLERS * BEDFORD FALLS





Record Reviews

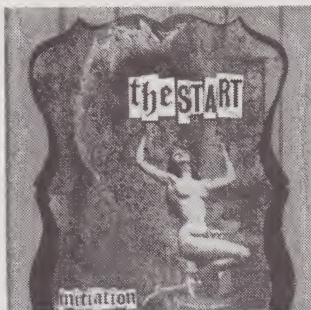


their CDs. So great, this album is moody, but it's so moody, without a single break, that it's actually boring. Circle Takes The Square and moody but they have some nice thrash to take edge of and draw you back into reality. This album just has nothing. It's bad, really bad. I don't know what put's me off – the irritatingly repetitive acoustic guitar of the lame attempt at being heavy. Yawn. (Geoff)
Century Media

These Arms are Snakes

Oxeneers or The Lion Sleeps When Its Antelope Go Home

Stunning art-core music that is as intense as it is beautiful. This is one of those rare releases that makes reviewing records and shifting through the rubbish worth it. (Natalie)
Jade Tree



The Umbrella Sequence

Sparkler Cliché

This is a pretty unusual record and for that I've taken quite a liking to it. This record contains fairly conventional, fairly poppy, music such as you would find on a Muse or Radiohead album but as their name (sparkler) alludes there are some much more interesting electronica elements on here in the 'glitch' sort of vein that you would expect from a Mira Calix or Plunderphonics album. Overall it's not too oppressive or in your face in the way some bands can be when they try and throw in chaotic electronica and as a result this is really easy listening and very relaxing. I like this, it's unusual and different but more than that, and this is where I'm giving the band credit, is they've tried something new out and it has pulled off. (Geoff)
Ohev Records

Tommy Stinson

Village Gorilla Head

Tommy Stinson is nice happy feel good rock. Tommy is in reality just another singer/song writer/guitarist but of course they do have their niche in music and I have no problems with this CD. I think it's a very commercial release but there is something endearing about it and I'm finding it very hard to say anything other than 'this just isn't me'. Tommy is nice and inoffensive and seems to have staked no claim to being anything other than just a light enjoyable guitar frivolity. I don't know what else to say. If you want a better review go listen to the CD because it'll say more than a thousand words and then you can make up your own opinion. (Geoff)
Sanctuary

Tsunami Bomb

The Definitive Act

These guys present something of a guilty pleasure for me. I mean, this is REALLY slick and has huge production, and doesn't do anything new. Yet I can't help but tap my foot and enjoy it. I think its mainly down to Agent M's vocals which are just so strong and infectious, and yes, this does come from more of "post-hardcore" direction than previous material, but it doesn't quite feel like its jumping on the bandwagon. The 'darker' side of their songs is also pretty cool, and it kinda reminds me of a female fronted Alkaline Trio. (mikey)
Kung Fu records

Tycker Du?

Close to it 5"

Our record player won't play 5" so I don't really have any idea what the music on here sounds like, but judging by the name I can make an educated guess. It's a shame that I can't listen to it because the packaging is lovingly put together and I would assume that the music is of a similar calibre. In case it makes a difference to people I think that this is a side project of Phoenix Foundation. (edd)
ferlex_records@yahoo.se

Underoath

They're Only Chasing Safety

Apparently Underoath have evolved into a 'more direct heavy rock style avoiding any hardcore clichés they might have previously garnered... it's hard to imagine anyone penning Underoath with clichés at all' Ok, let me have a go. Shit. Utter drivel. Complete toss. Fuck off to MTV you cocks. (Christian)

Golf records

Underminded

Hail Unamerican!

I didn't really understand this record. I mean like they had lyrics such as 'Hail young hearts/ unite as one voice/ who's fucked now?' or simply 'We will rise up!' but I mean against who, against the kids who don't want to visit either punkvoter or conservativepunk (they're both name checked in the notes), or is it just that those phrases sound cool, and you want to use them to try and get a good sing along? I suspect it might be the later. This is - in my humble opinion - tired, anthemetic hardcore with generic cheesy metallic riffs every couple of bars. Musically it's dull, and lyrically it's just really, deeply confused. Seriously how exactly am I supposed to educated myself at either conservativepunk or punkvoter. They're both written by idiots. Maybe suggest some Chomsky or something next time round hey - even Michael Moore would have been a better suggestion! (edd)
Kung Fu Records

Voodoo Glow Skulls

Addicón, Tradicón, Revolución

The Voodoo Glow Skulls... Man what a complete load of crap. To think I endured 14 songs of this to write a review. So in fairness this is actually an improvement on their past outings but really. I mean do they not in practice go, 'Hey you know guys this incessant trumpeting thing is kind of giving me a headache', or 'Guys didn't we write this exact same song three years ago for another record'. Needless to say I didn't enjoy this! (bob)
Victory Records

Wasted

Here We Go Again: 7" Collection 1998-2001

Well done melodic HC with strong 'street punk' influences from Finland. Nicely political. I'm afraid I'm going to have to yet again use the reviewers get out clause and say it isn't really my cup of char-char, but it is well done and anyone into this kind of stuff will probably already know Wasted and know whether they want this or not! (Christian)
Boss Tuneage

Weapons of Mass Belief

Terrorist Youth

Unlike most of the shite which is sent in for review I was quite interested to hear this. Vaguely interesting packaging and explicitly political. Shame then the music is shit, especially the 2nd track which veers exceedingly close to nu-metal. The promo sheet (always a bad thing to include if I'm reviewing anything!) goes on about hip-hop and how the two main vocalists are rappers. Ok then, but only in the same sense that Fred Durst is a rapper. (Christian)
American Blood Records

The Wednesdays

You Will Gasp And They Will Breathe

This record is different and unpleasantly awkward enough to draw me in half the way to liking it. Unfortunately when the band aren't messing around with awkward rests and stupid tempos and riffs they're just playing dull punk that isn't worth singing about. It's a shame really because there are enough element in this record that I really like, but there just aren't enough. As a result this band in my opinion are just another band that could be great but in reality are nothing to sing about. (Geoff)
Reservation Records

Witch Hunt

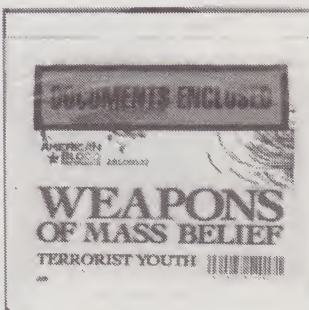
EPs and Crucial Chaos Radio Session

Fast, thrasy, female driven hardcore in the vein of Submission Hold, Circle Takes the Square and parts of 1905. Crushing, angry songs about the oppression of women, patriarchy, abuse, war and other important issues, but then what else would you expect from a Profane Existence release. Brilliant!
(Natalie)
Profane Existence

Youth In Asia

EP

This isn't very good. In fact it's pretty terrible. Poor, poor power pop that makes me cringe whenever I hear



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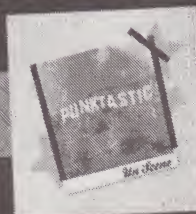


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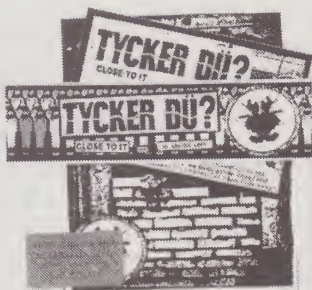
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Record Reviews



it. Stuck somewhere between the worst of Drive Thru records and SoCal pop-punk. Not good at all. (bob) yiamusic.com

V/A Fenriz Presents...The Best of Old-School Black Metal

I actually fought with someone to get this CD to review and, now that I have it, am at a severe loss for words. All I can remember when I play this is when I was about 13 and used to go round this guy Tom's house for parties. We'd all get drunk on 3lt bottles of Strongbow and discuss our dreadful taste in music. At some point in the evening Tom would sit at his grand piano and play Funeral Fog and scream about how he loved Mayhem, thoroughly creeping the shit out of us and convincing me that Black Metal was the scariest creation of mankind. Anyway, this is amazing! All the 'classic' artists like Mayhem, Burzum and Sodom come together to provide a really scary atmospheric compilation, complete with classical instrumentals, super-high-speed drumming and those vocals that one usually associates with the voice over on Thriller. (12-oh-5)

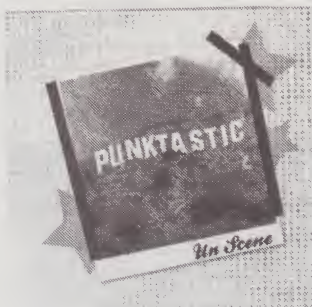
Peaceville Records



V/A The First Crush Compilation

Yeah, now this is what compilations should look like. This - as you might have guessed from the title - is an emo comp based around the idea of the 'first crush'. Every band whose music is on the comp was asked to write a short piece on their 'first crush' and pretty much every band has done. It means you have both compelling listening and reading. This was originally released in 1997, and the fact that it can be re-released now and still feel like the music is as fresh as ever is testament to the talent that this CD managed to capture! (edd)

Thick as Thieves Records, thickasthieves.com



V/A Here Cometh the Metalhead

This is a pretty pointless CD collecting tracks from various famous 'metal' bands. Some are good (Kyuss, Melvins) and some shite (Pantera, Ministry, Kings X). Anyone who has any interest in metal will know the bands on here. The horrible press release which comes with it hints at the true purpose of this CD. Getting gullible nu-metal kids to put more money into this huge Corporations pocket. What a co-incidence - all the bands on here have released records on either Warner or its subsidiaries! Unless you are a nu-metal kid with little knowledge of metal who sees this for a couple of quid this CD is a complete waste of time. (Christian)

Warner



V/A Milk Me Honey

I don't really know where this came from. I think it might have been sent in by HAGL, but I'm not sure. Regardless it's not a bad comp with some decent street punk/ hardcore bands featured. It doesn't feel like a whole lot of time went into arranging where the different songs went, but it's still not a bad release. (bob)

Wake Up! and Moloko plus (sorry we can't find an address)

V/A Newest Industry - a compilation 2002-2004-10-26

If you're not familiar with Newest Industry, the label was created by Monk Dave at Fracture, and musically deals with bands that are not a million miles away from the 'No Idea Sound'. They may have made their own little niche but they do it well, and this comp is no exception, with a lot of thought clearly going into what tracks go where. This then is 27 choice cuts from the Newest Industry roster. There isn't a bad song on here, and will invariably open your eyes to some awesome bands that you didn't know existed. (bob) Newest Industry

V/A Punktastic - Unscene

Punktastic - and I refuse to believe there are many reading this who don't know who they are - is a UK

based punk news website. Over the past couple of years its managed to develop a weird hub of a community and this is one of its exports. Really I shouldn't like this comp, and really didn't expect to, but maybe it's because it's in small doses I found myself enjoying some of these poppy little numbers. Some of it was amazing (Matt Reynolds from Howards Alias acoustic track for one), some of it is terrible (Sonic Boom Six's intro and outro) other bits were slightly mediocre (stories and comets), but for the most part it was a good comp, and something worth picking up if you like your punk with a pop twist. (edd) punktastic.com

V/A Punk Rock is your Friend #5

I don't really like Kung Fu's output at the best of time, but having to listen to near thirty songs of it didn't leave me in the best mood. For the most part it's just bad emo-pop music that sounds an awful lot like the Ataris. Maybe you like this, certainly there were a couple of good songs (Tsunami Bomb and Ozma were both OK). The thing I really don't get though is why Kung Fu keeps insisting on using 'punk' iconography like heavily contrasted images, studded belts etc, when it really has nothing to do with their label or the type of music that they're releasing. But yeah I don't advise you go buy this. If you're looking for good power-pop go find a Look Out compilation or something. (edd) Kung Fu Records

V/A Rock against Bush vol. 2

The second installment of the Rock Against Bush comps. I won't go into the concerns (raised by others before) about how much change will actually come about from Bush being kicked out of office, but anyway... You get some great bands (Thought Riot and Sick Of It All both put in great tracks with "You're Gonna Die" and "Can't Wait to Quit"), some fun bands (cheesy as they are, I do enjoy Flogging Molly and Mad Caddies), and some fucking terrible ones (I've tried to like Sugarcult and Yellowcard but they really are both fucking shit...). There's a good mix of tracks here, and plenty of unreleased songs, and I feel that there is a bit more variety than on the previous comp, so I can't fault it music wise. Pick this up for the mix of music rather than the more dubious political intention. (mikey)

Fat Wreck Chords

V/A San Diego is Burning

A comp of various artists from around San Diego and I was kinda worried that it would all be either screamo or pop punk, but its actually coming from way more of an indie (as in independent) rock vibe, and is generally a bit of a mellow and more thoughtful (still loud mind...especially the artist called "Bunky") collection of music. I really was into Via Satellite's song "Close as I Can", it had a really nice mellow post-rock vibe to it. I think this is really cool, I was pleasantly surprised by this and it'll teach me to not be so prejudiced to "indie" music, there's some interesting stuff out there. Oh yeah, 50% of profits from this go to the san Diego humane society, an anti-animal cruelty organization, which is very rad. More money to good causes can only be a positive thing. (mikey) Loud and Clear records

V/A Subversion

A comp benefiting Amnesty International made up of lots of punk (ala Household Name style) bands. It sort of works. I'm not particularly excited about it, but then again I'm not the biggest fan of compilation records in the whole world. If you see it for a couple of quid you could do worse than picking it up. (edd)

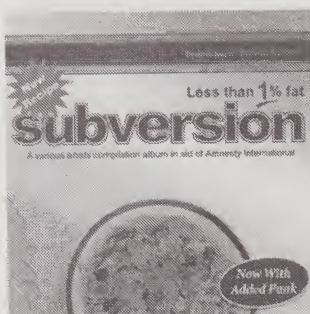
Not reviewed this issue (sorry):

Floor - S/t (no idea)

Please Mr Grave Digger - Here's to the life of the Party (?)

The Paper Chase - split (?)

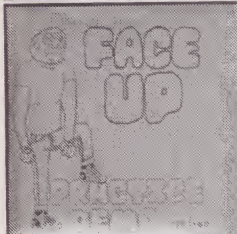
It'll all be reviewed next issue.







Demo Reviews



Belle Epoque Demo

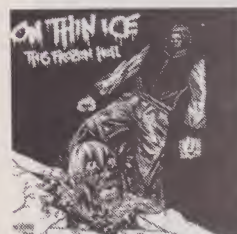
The Pine are shit. However this French band who recently toured our fair shores with 'em are the complete opposite. Well recorded with lovely packaging. Musically it's French emo (i.e. the best) and I am looking forward to more output by them (maybe on Stonehenge?)



The Devil Rides Out Don't Drop the Coffin

Ex-Minority, it's good to see these Ippo gravediggers finally dropped the gen-pop-punk angle and concentrated on delivering what they loved best. This is a lethal dose of melodious, peak period Misfits punk noir, with the rabid fervour of The Foamers and a macabre mad Freaks Union. I think you might still be able to pick up a free copy of this four track off their website, and if not you'll certainly be able to exhume the MP3, so I suggest we all unearth this one quick smart...there may be plenty of room left in hell, but you never know when it's going to freeze over. (lipgloss)

www.thedevilridesout.com



Hell, I hated this before I even put it on... If I'm going to be fair, they haven't been together very long and I'm not the biggest fan of old skool punk, so I suppose I'm not the best person to review this. I have this horrific feeling that this record is a 'grower'. It uses really basic chord repetition and this song called 'Argy Bargy' is forever engrained in my mind after they repeat the words 'Argy Bargy' 8 times. Anyway, I suppose if you like old-skool they do it pretty well (there isn't really much of a formula to play around with, is there?!) so there's a fair bit of potential. But, Cocksparrer?! (12-oh-5)

On Thin Ice This Frozen Hell

So the band's taken a slightly different direction on this new record, it's less old school, more pissed off, hardcore. I personally prefer it to the first demo. Check out the interview elsewhere in this issue, and then check out this band/ demo! (bob)

Owing To Life She Is Life

The simplest way to describe OTL would be to say they're metallic hardcore. They are, however, not particularly innovative or even very good. It's one thing to take an old idea and do it well but to create something this stagnant, is that even aloud? Surely they must be committing some crime against nature? In any case this has no appeal to me and if you're a serious hardcore fan I doubt it'll appeal to you either. The nu-metal fans, if some still exist (Fony haven't split yet to the best of my knowledge so there must be some nu-metal fans lurking out there), will probably get a kick out of this band but I can't stand this record. It's not my thing. There is no thrash nor is there a solid bass line or fast paced drumming (the drumming is particularly weak). This is actually sleep inducing. (Geoff)

The Rejects Welcome to Essex

What utter, vapid shit. They could have perhaps been excused if they were a bunch of 14 year olds, but from the photo it's clear that they are all at least 18. For our sakes let us hope they never leave Essex!

Stutter Demo

These kids haven't quite decided what direction it is they are trying to go in. They stumble over Nirvana, Red Hot Chile Peppers, Pulp and a lack of confidence and familiarity with their instruments. Not wanting to be too harsh as I'm sure many a band have some painful demos hidden away if they could just decide on their own style and spend time working on it I'm sure they would improve.

(Natalie)

ZeroXTolerance We're the straight edge police

The title for this tape demo's pretty dumb, but I think it's a joke so I'll let it pass! Really nicely presented, and a lot of times gone into putting this together. For a demo it's also got a pretty good production job. They also play pretty good music, Black Flag-esque straightedge hardcore about conforming, poseurs and all that sort of stuff. It's good, just a shame I don't have a tape player at the moment so have to go round to a friends house if I want to listen to it! (bob)

zeroxtolerance.com



Face Up Practice Demo

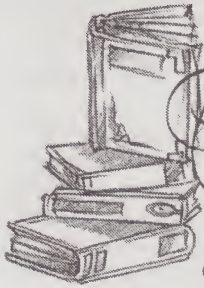
So I was just reading the inlay and saw this was recorded in two hours onto a Minidisc players. That's why it sounds like shit then I guess! It's a shame cause the music/ lyrics sound like they'd be pretty cool on a decent recording. The demo artwork made it look like it'd be in a lockin' out records vein of hardcore, but it's more thrashy than that, so don't judge the book by it's cover. (bob) faceup@hotmail.com

Innocent Blood Judgement

Innocent Blood are another band coming out of Canterbury. Kind of like ThexBreakIn they play tough, metal influenced, hardcore with fairly regular beatdowns. The demo's not helped by pretty sludgy production, which loses some of the clarity that you get when they play live, but it's still pretty good quality. (bob) innocentbloody2k@yahoo.co.uk

The Neds Non-Educated Delinquents

Er... This band actually admits in the cover that they are influenced by Cocksparrer. COCKSPARRER?!



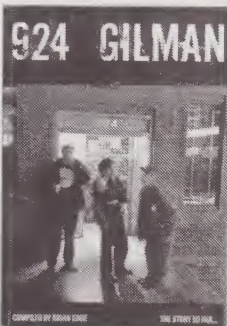
Book Reviews

924 Gilman, The Story So Far...

Brian Edge (Eds.)

Maximum Rock N Roll

ISBN 0-9755680-0-0 / £12



Ever since I first heard about it I thought that Gilman Street was one of, if not the most punk things I'd ever heard about. "No racism, no sexism, no homophobia, no drugs, no alcohol, no violence, all

ages, volunteer run." Those are a pretty awesome rules for a punk club space to be run by. Before starting this I regarded Gilman through slightly rose tinted glasses. I mean one of the sole reasons that I wanted to visit the west coast was to go visit and help out at it. I still want to do that, but I think I'll approach the space slightly more realistically than I would have done without having read this. Brian Edge has compiled a set of contributions that show the best and worst of Gilman. Essentially: The history of the space warts and all. If you want to get a feel for what happened at Gilman then this is the place to start. It seems that everyone who played an active role as part of the team at Gilman has been asked to contribute, and a good number. What's produced then is as an objective view of Gilman Street as you're likely to get just because you have so many subjective view points. Some of the articles are of course better written, and some of them repeat what someone else has said, but for the most part each is worth the effort to read, and each offers their own rewards. On top of this are re-prints of fliers, meeting call outs, meeting minutes, letters, city council permits, MRR columns, full list of every band that's ever played etc. basically a whole load of primary source material (sorry I'm a history student). This is one of the best things about the book, but conversely it's own worst enemies. On the one hand it's interesting seeing some of these things, but you sometimes feel drowned by pieces that aren't really analysed, and seem to be simply there because they were found. Kids who like to know *everything* about something will be glad for it to be included – and I count myself as one of those kids, but I'm not sure how much use others will get out of it. The layout also didn't seem to have enough time put

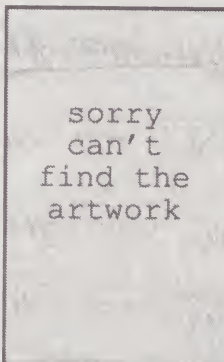
into it. As a font Arial never works well in books, and 924 is no exception. Likewise reprints sometimes have been scanned straight from the original material, which makes it often hard, or simply annoying, to read. It's a shame because it's a really minor niggle but after some 300-odd pages it really began to get on my nerves. Despite all the problems though, the book still shines. It's really one of the best documents of a scene, and a space that I've ever come across, and certainly the most complete piece of 'punk' history that I've read. Some people complain that punk should be history-less but I personally think that there's a lot to be learnt from documenting and reading about other peoples' experiences. I think though it'd be interesting to see a book that takes all these primary sources and writes something slightly more analytical. All the same this is absolutely essential and well, well worth reading, not least to hear that a band called 'nasal sex' existed! (edd)

Available for £12 from Active Distribution

The Animal Liberation Movement In The Spirit of Emma

Peter Singer

No ISBN / £1



and that to deny animals this right was tantamount to speciesism (a violation of equality by giving greater weight to the interests of our own species). Peter Singer is regularly recognised as being the intellectual head of the Animal Liberation movement, in much the same way that Chomsky is regarded as the intellectual authority behind the anti-globalization movement. This is more a pamphlet, rather than a book, collating an essay that Singer wrote – as far as I can make out in the late 1980s – about the Animal Liberation Movement. The essay explores, briefly, the reasons behind the movement's aims (essentially a synopsis of his book 'Animal Liberation'), some of its achievements, and

its potential future. Peter Singer is of the opinion that the Animal Liberation movement should not use violence, or the threat of violence to achieve its goals. He very briefly explains that this is because it would result in the polarization of opinion, and would split the sympathies of many people. I don't doubt this would be true, but I'm not sure this is a real reason to not act in those manners; it's just Singer's personal opinion. If anything I think he should have explored this point slightly more in the essay. Despite this the essay acts as a good exploration of some of Singer's ideas, though I do think if this is the first time you've come across Singer you'd be better off reading 'Animal Liberation'. (edd)

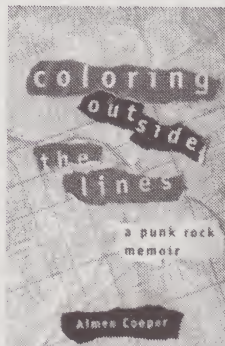
Available for £1 from Active Distribution

Coloring outside the Line - A Punk Rock Memoir

Aimee Cooper

Rowdy's Press

ISBN 0-9723117-1-8 / £6



Wow, I was just reading through the reviews bit of this book contemplating what to write when I spotted that the kid from Howsyouedge.com says, 'Pick this book up!' That's pretty bizarre considering the

content. This is a book about a kid who got involved in the early days of the LA Punk scene. It's pretty economical on prose, and some times the continuity goes a bit haywire, but for the most part it's a pretty good read. Aimee wasn't really too involved in the punk scene, and she wasn't really a 'punk' per say, she was just looking for an adventure, whilst she was a kid, and fell into punk as a result. Her detachment and distance from the "scene" is part of the strengths of the book, it's because of it that she can present the hypocrisies of some of the kids calling themselves punks, and the contradictions of identifying as a punk were in LA in the early eighties. A problem I had whilst reading the book was that it seems that the people are punk purely because they wear ripped up clothes get jacked up on drugs and drink copious amount of alcohol. Then again maybe that's what the LA scene was about. It would certainly explain why X and Black Flag are so pissed off. I'm not sure this is a must read, it's an interesting read, but it's one that's over pretty quickly (three or four hours tops) and doesn't really do much other than present one girl's idea of what it was to be punk in the early eighties. At least it gives a different insight to what is normally presented of the early LA punk scene (and the punk scene in general), in so much as this hasn't been written through the eyes of a band, or the eyes of a male, but rather through a girl who still feels like a bit of an outsider, despite being in a scene which was

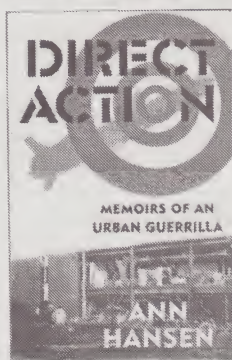
supposed to welcome outcasts. I guess for that insight it's worth the cover price! (edd)
www.razorcake.com

Days Of Dissent - Reflections on Summit Mobilisation
Dissent Network
Dissent
No ISBN/ £1.50



This journal follows the well-trodden tradition of compiling articles about summit mobilisations. This one tries to draw articles from a wide range of events from the expected such as J18 and N30 Seattle, through to the less well known 1988 protests against the IMF in West Berlin. The aim of the journal appears to be to explore what people have and haven't done well when organising to demonstrate/ shut down/ etc massive world summits (such as the World Trade Organisation, World Bank, G8 etc) when they've come to town, with the aim to facilitate brain storming over tactics/ organisation of next year's G8 protests in Scotland. It works really well, and the articles in here are some of the best written on the events that I've been able to get my hands on. The pieces on Gothenburg in 2001, and West Berlin in '88 also opened my eyes up to two large protests that I knew little about before reading this. If you want an indication of what to expect from this then read the article 'Shattering the Myth of Seattle' in this issue, as it's a reprint from this journal. I can't recommend this highly enough. (edd)
dissent.org.uk/ active distribution

Direct Action - Memoirs of an Urban Guerrilla
Ann Hansen
AK Press
ISBN 1-902593-48-0 / £10



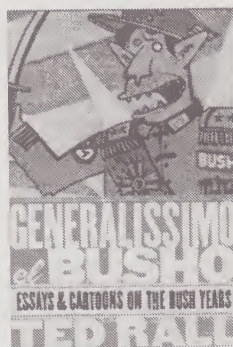
This was published way back in 2002, but it had a big impact on me. Direct Action was a militant direct action group, who hoped to inspire others to take up arms against the state. They were inspired by the Red Army Faction of Europe's guerrilla tactics, but felt alienated by their assassinations and kidnappings. Direct Action was a group that only wanted to cause property damage, and avoid any human or animal casualties, or injuries. The members of Direct Action were finally arrested on

January 19th 1984. Normally with cases like this you don't hear from any person in the group again, for whatever reason militant direct action groups are written about by historians, who tend to treat everything in a dry, dead manner (as historians are prone to do). Ann Hansen took a different approach.

Ann Hansen was one of the members of Direct Action, and the 'Memoirs of an Urban Guerrilla' are in essence her autobiography. She documents in painstaking detail her love affair with European radicalism, which she then bought back with her to Canada, her meeting with Brent Taylor and Doug Stewart (the other original members of DA), their reasons for taking militant direct action, and the planning for the attacks, and then the attacks themselves.

Direct Action 'Memoirs of an Urban Guerrilla' offers an insight into the mind of someone who tried to fight the state, capitalism, and the arms trade head on, and has remained entirely unrepentant despite being punished for her actions. The interesting part of the memoirs comes not from the actions that the group took (which are it has to be said pretty fucking cool), but rather from her belief that their actions could have been more effective, and more inclusive if they hadn't been guerrillas, but had rather used the tactics currently employed by the ALF and ELF. Even if you have no interest in direct action or revolutionary activity, this is – thanks to the fact that it's written as a novel – really fucking readable. Ann Hansen by all rights is an incredible author, keeping the story moving, whilst still managing to evoke a vivid impression of what the place and times must have been like for her and her comrades. If rumour is to be believed Hansen is currently writing a novel about how prison dehumanises and damages the inmates who are held there. If it's as readable as Direct Action is then I can't wait.
Available from AK Press

Generalissimo El Busho - Essays and Cartoons on the Bush Years
Ted Rall
NBM Publishing
ISBN 1-56163-384-4 / £11.99



newspapers. He writes articles and draws cartoons, largely about how much American politics sucks. Recently he's been pre-occupied by how much Bush sucks. This is then is Rall's collection of 'How much Bush

I think that most of us will know Ted Rall through his columns in Maximum Rock N Roll, though in the real world he's probably better known from his Republican baiting on various American TV shows and

sucks' literature. It's cool, and funny, and one hell of a lot better than Al Franken, Michael Moore and most of the other 'left-wing' American commentators. He still annoyingly falls for talking about 'Our Country', as though the state is something that we as it's 'citizens' can control, and the sleeve notes declare that is 'fiercely devoted to traditional American values of freedom and integrity', which makes me wonder where he was smoking weed when he should have been in class learning about the desecration of the Native American states when the Europeans decided to expand their freedoms from sea to shining sea in North America. Invariably I'm forced to forgive him every time that I read him just because he's fucking funny, something that the rest of the 'left-wing' comedians haven't really got the hang of. If he follows in the line of anyone it's Bill Hicks, launching from polemic to polemic and pretty much attacking anyone who gets in the way of his personal opinion.

The book is split into four parts. 'The Seizure of Power', which, unsurprisingly focuses on the coup d'etat that Bush and his friends somehow managed to pull off in November 2000. Part two: '9/11', which is – outside of anarchist circles – one of the most impressive critiques of 9/11 that I've so far read. Despite Rall's clear anger he still manages to handle the situation with tact and wit. 'War Without Justification, War Without End', follows and unsurprisingly focuses on the lies that we were all told to justify the invasion of Iraq. Finally Rall focuses his attention on the 'Year of The Long Knives', which focuses on the build up to Bushes re-election. I'm not entirely sure why Rall has chosen to use the 'Year of The Long Knives' analogy since I think we're well beyond 1934, all the same Rall once again is refreshingly critical, and clear headed about the problems that everybody would face if Bush got re-elected (without falling for the trap of seeing the Democrats as some great white hope). Rall falls down slightly in his final word, where he asserts that Bush was wrong for attacking Afghanistan and Iraq, because he should have been going after Pakistan and Saudi Arabia. To a certain extent this is one of Rall's problems, he still seems to believe that there should be a President, and hierarchies. He just wants one who'll take 'radical' like giving health care to all Americans who don't have it. He recognises that free trade is a problem but calls simply for taxes being put in place, rather than having something truly 'radical' enacted. All the same ignoring my problems with Rall's political logic, and aspirations (he is a liberal after all), he manages to write some incredibly good critiques of the current administration, and that's worth the asking price alone. (edd)

www.nbm.com

Off The Map
anon
CrimethInc.
No ISBN/ £4



I'm not entirely sure what i was expecting from this book...I'd heard some comparisons with Evasion and i guess, to some extent, there are some similarities- the ethics of 'living for free' and forays into unknown

territories, etc. However, I think this is slightly better, purely because the Girls have a gift for storytelling, weaving pictures and characters so that you can see them with your own eyes. This kind of pictorial fascination is what i find lacks in Evasion. I really was lured into their world of the feminine struggle in a scene that prides itself on equality but very rarely follows through with the two genders working together. This idea of living in hope of finding something positive, a rose amongst thorns if you like (!), is what makes this book work. Although some of the language becomes a little too cheesy in places (why so many references to angels?!). I was genuinely inspired by their adventures and ingenuity. I guess fearing for your life in a car driven at 90mph by a coked-up Frenchman only really happens if

you take the plunge and hitchhike around Europe. If you like travelling and were thinking of trying something a little different, i think this is the book that might make you get up and actually do it. Plus, the artwork rocks. (12o5)

crimethinc.com / activedistribution.org.uk

Not on the Label: What really goes into the food on your plate.

Felicity Lawrence

Penguin

ISBN 0-141-01566-7/ £7.99



Food might not be the most glamorous of things to write a book on but its pretty dam important. Also worth considering is the way in which the current food system is run and the

consequence this has on not only the quality of food we each and our health, but also for those producing it and for the environment. As someone who is already concerned about the ways of the food industry the 'exposes' come as no news or surprise to me but nevertheless its still shocking and infuriating to read about how those with the most money and power (i.e. supermarkets and big food companies) are able to place so much pressure on the poorest (i.e. labourers,

farmers, less wealthy consumers, local shops, etc) so that they are left with no choice and forced to buckle to their demands. The contents page at the front neatly divides the book into food topics such as Chicken, Salads, Bread, Apples and Ready Meals but in reality these all roll into one and are intimately linked to global capitalism, exploitation and greed. Whether the system can ever be reformed remains to be seen, but the author's avocation of using local, fresh organic produce and independent shops in the neighbourhood, wherever possible is definitely sound advice. (Natalie)

You're Already Dead

Crass

Active

No ISBN/ £1

YOU'RE ALREADY DEAD



by CRASS

against consumerism, not doing stuff for yourself, getting exploited, capitalism etc. It's an interesting read, and is certainly well worth a pound coin. (bob)

Active Distribution

This was originally published by Crass back in 1984, and handed out to audiences for free. This is essentially a brief pamphlet dedicated to Crass ranting (in a good way)

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Fanzine Reviews

Fanzine reviews are opinions don't get bummed if you didn't get as good a review as you think it deserved!
More importantly if you're sending off for a zine remember to send an SAE, or an extra 50p to cover the cost of postage. Also remember to give them your address. I know that sounds like a no-brainer but seriously write your name and address in as many different places as physically possible, that way it's harder to lose it!

Adbusters #55

A4/ Colour/ Printed/ 80 pages/ Steal it
Does anyone remember when Adbusters was actually good, rather than a myopic magazine dedicated to anti-semitism, and how the economists are gonna save us. Yeah fucking awesome. There's a couple of interesting articles, but for the most part this is just dull posturing, and attempt to sell their 'radical' trainer, because of course the revolution needs to be commercialised.
adbusters.com

Anthill #4

A5/ B&W/ copied/ 24 pages/ free (to a good home)

A zine made up of random assortments of opinion, review and interview, all (apparently) randomly cut n pasted into place into a zine form. It works for the most part. Nothing particularly special to write home about, but it's worth an SAE to get hold of it. umm apparently this zine doesn't want to have an address!

Black Flag #223

A4/ B&W/ Printed/ 40 pages/ £2

This is now an old issue (Autumn 2003 if I'm not mistaken) but apparently a whole load went missing when it first got printed and have now been re-found. Regardless... Black Flag is a magazine made by class struggle anarchists, it's one of the few magazines of it's type that's well written, and analytical about more than just 'reclaiming the means of production'. This issue has

a particular focus on what men can do to change their behaviour, Bikes across Borders in Mexico, alternative to tampons and how to make DIY towels, a short story I didn't really get, sci-fi pyrotechnic acrobatic festival performers ELXT90, going on tour using vegetable oil instead of petrol, September 11th protests in Chile, mega-faunal extinction, inspiration for change and general news and bits and bobs. Generally it's fairly interesting but the only problems I see with this is that, in this issue at least they seem to be repeating a lot of stuff that has previously been said and may be only likely to ever reach those already converted and playing with the fires of discontent already. That said issue 5 looks set to be really interesting with articles planned on homelessness, raising children and the rise of security culture. However, I think it's still important for discussion forums to be available and for everybody to have access to new ideas and a sense of community which I'm sure this collective are doing very well in Portland at least and good luck to them. They seem supper organised at least with a break down of costs on page 3. The kids behind this have definitely put a lot of hard time and work in raising money and producing the 'zine. It's always a tricky one to criticise things like these and maybe it's just me, but I much prefer A4 or smaller publications and given that the typeface is very large as are the pictures they might be better to reduce the size and some of the harsh realities of having to recover costs

with Hey Colossus! Plus reviews, a couple of well aimed rants. Good stuff.

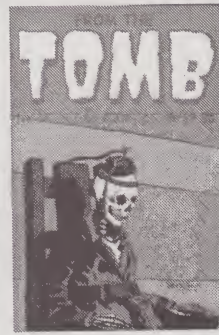
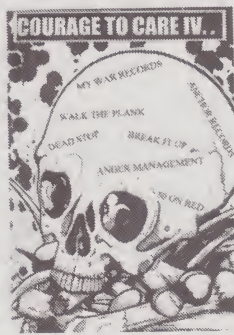
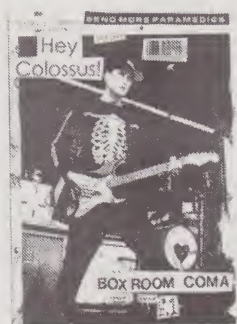
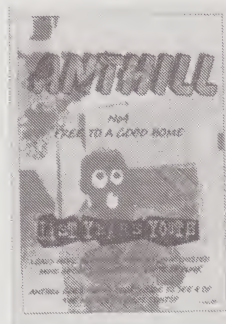
Courage to Care #4

A4/ B&W/ Printed/ 44 pages/ £2 (?)

So CTC #3 was almost exclusively done by PetexBust (who I'm led to believe is taking up a residency at our very own inferior publication), therefore this issue is done by its other half, Katie (who also runs a totally awesome distro, get in touch for details). #4 is supposed to have a record label theme, so there are a bunch of interviews with a variety of labels, varying from a hideously self-congratulatory spiel from Reflections (which put me off ever having anything to do with them ever again) to a bunch of new, up and coming labels from over the pond. The result is a partial success. In terms of profiling new labels, it's pretty cool, but more or less the same questions are asked to each label and the layout varies from messy to confusing. The interviews with Dead Stop, Break it Up, Walk the Plank and Fifty on Red (featuring the aforementioned MrxBust himself) make for better reading, truth be told (although I cannot agree with Pete on MLIW - they're fuckin amazing!!!). This is still a good read though - get it if you have a life. (Alan)

Kitty_core@hotmail.com,
courage_to_care@hotmail.com, 9 Welton Mount, Hyde Park, Leeds LS6 1NQ, UK

CrimethInc. workers bulletins #47 & #74
A3/ Blue & Black/ Printed/ 4 pages/ Free



interesting articles on opposition to the Olympics, opposition to the war with Iraq, how democracy is undemocratic and a piece on what happens to Mayday now. It's good stuff.

Active Distribution - activedistribution.org.uk
/ BM Hurricane, London, WC1N 3XX

Blackthorn #4

A3/B&W/Printed/28 pages/Free

Very much in the vein of Crimethinc publications the Black Thorn collective from Portland have come together to produce a newspaper sized zine that they hope will help fuel the fires of discontent. Articles on reclaiming space from sexism attitudes with

somehow, especially when mass printing a free zine. But again good luck to them, I just hope they don't crash and burn out prematurely. (Natalie)
PO BOX 11046, Portland, Oregon, 97211

Box Room Coma #1

A5/ B&W/ copied/ 32 pages/ £1

Woah, crazy cut n pasting abounds. I think practically every word on here has been separately cut n glued. It's a cool aesthetic, but man is it hard to read. It makes for a good read though if you can get round the eyestrain. Short interview with Send More Paramedics, and a slightly more indepth one

A brief bulletin that essentially repeats the cry that CrimethInc. doesn't exist. If this is the first time you've heard the word CrimethInc. then I would suggest getting hold of 'Days Of War, Nights Of Love' as an introduction to the group. For those who are 'CrimethInc. kids' this is an interesting read!
crimethinc.com / activedistribution.org.uk

DIY Guide #2 / The Walls are Alive

A5/ Red and Black/ Printed/ 70 pages/ Free

CrimethInc. just had a whole load of these reprinted, and this is absolutely essential reading. The Walls are Alive - which was reviewed back in #5 - is a 'how to' on urban

Fanzine Reviews

redecorating, with flyposting and graffiti tips abounding. If you're new to the graffiti/ stencil thing and want some advice then look no further than this zine. The DIY Guide is perhaps even more awesome with tips on direct action, shoplifting, pirating software, travelling, sewing, making a quarter pipe, publishing books, doing food not bombs, and a shit load more. This is one of my favourite 'guides'

Gadgie #17

A5/ B&W/ Printed/ 40 pages/ £1

Gadgie's rad. Always has been, and I expect always will be. If you like sound opinions on what's good in punk rock, with a good dose of humour then check this out. If you like crap music then avoid it. marvgadgie@hotmail.com

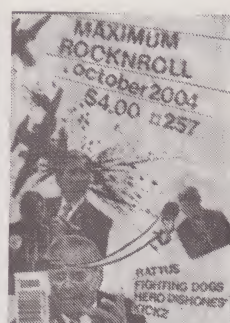
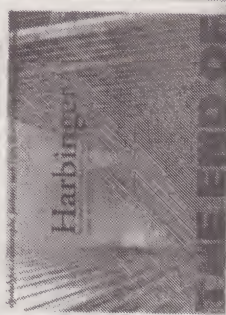
Gagged and Blindfolded/ 12o5 #2

A5/ B&W/ Printed/ 32 pages/ £1 (?)

Green Anarchy #17

A4/ b&w/ printed/ 78 pages/ \$3

I guess the front cover sums this up best "An anti-civilization journal of theory and action". Green Anarchy rules. It's well written and has some good ideas. Admittedly a lot of the time they descend into semantics and get themselves tied up about correct declensions about 'what anarchy is?' But then again maybe that's important. So yeah to conclude an incredibly hasty review go and find this and read it. It's well worth picking up.



around and I'm really happy that it got reprinted cause I lost my original copy. CrimethInc Urban Pirates – crimethinc.com or Active Distribution activedistribution.org.uk

Dirty Dog #7

A5/ B&W/ Copied/ 24 pages/ Free

There wasn't a whole lot to read in this zine. I mean there's a not terribly good interview with Warren from Against Me, Lawrence Arms and Hacksaw. Brief review section, and not a whole lot else. Maybe I just don't get it. nmethere@aol.com

Do The Dog Skazine #34

A5/ B&W/ Printed/ 16 pages/ £5.00 annual sub

Another class outing from Do The Dog here. Once again bringing all the news that you need to know about the UK ska scene to your attention. Kevin really knows his stuff. If you like ska there is no excuse not to be subscribed to this fanzine. dothedog.com

From The Tomb #13

A4/ B&W/ Printed/ 52 pages/ £3.95

This is the first time that I've encountered 'From The Tomb'. It's essentially a glossy fanzine (higher print quality than the one you're reading now) dedicated to – you've guessed it – all things horror and supernatural in the comic world. To be honest it's less interesting than I hoped it would be. I think this is largely because I prefer reading comics to reading about comics. I also really don't have the patience to try and remember all the facts that are being thrown in my direction, especially when I've never even heard of the original comic book, or it's artist, let alone seen any of the strips. Bits and pieces were cool though, especially the piece on the electric chair in comics. All the same I won't be re-buying this.

peter.normanton@btinternet.com

Finally the new issue has appeared, it seems to have been forever in production. The new issue's sorted all the layout problems that they had with #1, and thankfully got rid of the 'glossy paper of doom' (Chris 12o5's direct quote). It also feels more 12o5 like, with lots of columns and opinion pieces and a few interviews and reviews added for good measure. I'm not sure how you get a copy of this though, I haven't seen it around really, and I'm not sure how many got printed up, but try emailing Tim and see if you can get hold of a copy, cause it's well worth tracking down, or actually email Chris cause I can't find Tim's email address. slowergherkin@hotmail.com

Give Me a Break #2

A4/B&W/Printed/36 pages/£1

Self proclaimed 'Anarcha Feminist Girls Zine' from a group of women from the Netherlands. There's a strong sense of anarcha-feminist stances through from the on start alongside a declaration of being women only in the group with a few anti-male sentiments creeping in throughout the zine. Good for them if that's what they feel is best, but it's not something I'm entirely comfortable with as a feminist who believes the participation and encouragement of males and transgender people is really important if we are ever to tackle sexism everywhere. Nevertheless some interesting articles on murdered women in Chiapas and the Mexican governments lack of regard, Mayday 2002 in Amsterdam who masked up and started 'cleaning' capitalism with feather dusters, mops and cloths to highlight the sexism inherent in the system, criticisms of male dominated anarchists or 'Manarchists,' women in Afghanistan, an interview with the Dominatrix from Brazil and tons of other bits, bobs and food for thought. (Natalie) Anarchafeminist am*dam, Postbus 15595, 1001 NB Amsterdam, Netherlands nikita@hypocrisy.org

www.greenanarchy.org

Harbinger fifth communiqué

A3/ Red & Black/ Printed/ 12 pages/ Free

The new CrimethInc communiqué, this time entitled 'The End of The World', with a leading article exploring the idea that disaster's – such as 9/11 – are actually something of benefit as since they push us out of our comfortable life, whilst the real Disaster is the atomized, modern industrialised society that we've created. The front cover expressing that this zine is 'for anyone who has seen a smokestack and winced'. The rest of the issue expands on the ideas of failure being a beneficial, and dropping out of our respective economic classes as being a way to reclaim our lives. In addition there is a rather surreal article on maximum-ultraism (which seems to just be a new way of saying 'destroy everything everyday'), an interesting piece on crowd dynamics, and finally an article looking to 'the future'. It's another good Harbinger from CrimethInc. I just wish they had printed it on A4 paper so it was easier to read. crimethinc.com – or in UK activedistribution.org.uk

Heartattack #42

A4/ B&W/ Printed/ 62 pages/ £0.50

Actually this issue of Heartattack's pretty good. Vitamin X, Das Oath, The Great Redneck Hope, and Chainsaw all get interviewed. As always there's a good review section, and a decent amount of columns. The only thing that bothered me slightly about the issue was the response to complaints (specifically Jon Active's) about the wedding photos of #40. A very unimaginative argument is produced for why the editor of HaC was 'allowed to get married', which I'm not really sure was ever the issue. I think the issue was about putting said wedding photos on the front cover of a supposed 'punk' fanzine. Oh well HaC's still a good zine (even if they do dis one of my favourite band's new CD).

Fanzine Reviews

heartattack@ebullition.com /
activedistribution.org.uk

Mass Movement #?

A4/ B&W/ Printed/ 68 pages/ £2

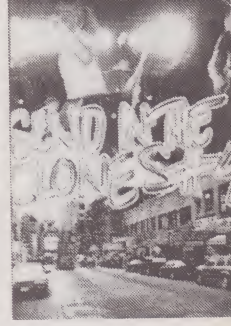
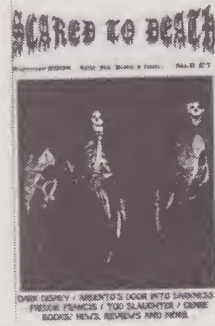
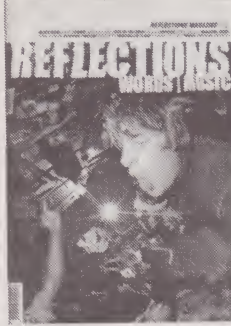
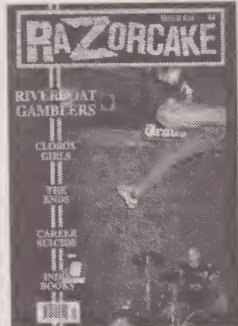
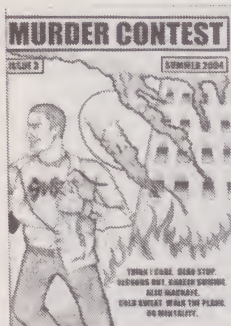
Man, I wish I'd got onto Mass Movement sooner than I have done. Seriously this zine is one of the best in the UK at the moment. A shit load of interviews both with big bands (Bad Religion, Pennywise etc) and little bands (Holier than Thou, Annihilation Time etc) and a couple of non-band interviews

Murder Contest #3

A4/ B&W/ Printed/ 56 pages/ £2.50(?)

This is undoubtedly the best UKHC fanzine there is. The layout is excellent (they have the cut 'n' paste thing down to a fuckin' T), the interviews are *always* well-researched and interesting (which is *really* rare) and the opinion columns are no bullshit, razorsharp home truths while remaining delightfully eloquent and considered. Simon Phillips and Gloria Lin have clearly gone out of their way to interview mainly bands who are kinda off

kind of like the opposite personality type to the kid who wrote Evasion. Where as that kid was militantly anti-work, sxe, and talked about Earth Crisis a lot, Nate who writes Pick Your Poison works because he needs the money for weed and alcohol and talks about dodgy punk bands regularly. Though I was worried I wasn't going to be able to relate to Pick Your Poison to begin with (having avoided temp jobs like the plague) I found myself really enjoying this. Nate's a really, really good writer, and really good at making



(Chronic Fatigue and Taang! Records) make for a fucking awesome read. The interviewers all manage to ask really interesting questions, and clearly know a lot of stuff about their subject. This is essential reading material.
mmzine.co.uk / 12 West Street, Aberkenfig, Bridgend, CF32 9BB

Maximum Rock N Roll #257

A4/ B&W/ Printed/ 120 pages/ £3.50

Wow I feel so much safer now knowing that Maximum Rock N Roll are endorsing electoral politics. Yeah sure you can claim it's just on a local level, but a politician is still a politician. At least there was some good articles on the stupidity of idea of getting 'Anybody but Bush' elected and on women being poorly represented by the Democrat party. There is unfortunately space given over to the Democrat's punk representative, Punkvoter. Oh well at least there's a good interview with Hero Dishonest, some good columns, and a couple of good UK scene reports. (edd)
Po Box 460760, SF, CA 94146-0760 or
activedistribution.org.uk in UK.

Media Whore #4

A5/B&W/Copied/32 pages/\$3

Cute little feminist 'zine this time with a focus on feminism expressed through art and performance. It features interviews radical cheerleading squad FATASS (Fat Action Troupe Allstar Spirit Squad) from Portland, feminist synchronised swimming team H2Os from Texas, a shout out to Ladyfests worldwide, info on the Independent Heroines Project in Australia, the Sex Workers' Art Show and a piece on 'Chrissy Caviar' who has marketed her eggs in caviar jars as an art project. Short, sweet and to the point it certainly illustrates the scope of feminist forms of media and expression. (Natalie)
Media Whore, 37 Home Street, Malden, MA 02148

the radar in British hardcore circles (with a few notable exceptions, Dead Stop being one) while managing to sniff out the really special bands before everyone else (last issue they brought us Cut the Shit and Annihilation Time, this time round it's Think I Care). They also interview Career Suicide, Seconds Out, Alec Mackaye, Cold Sweat, Walk the Plank and 86 Mentality. This zine is just about as "crucial" as it gets. Which is why it's such a pity that they felt the need to disguise a blatantly obvious swipe at Crimethinc as a question posed to Kev Walsh of Seconds Out. For a zine that prides itself on brutal honesty, surely they could have confronted Crimethinc head on?? Ah well, maybe one day eh?? This zine's going on hiatus for a bit while its record label arm releases the Seconds Out 7". It will be sorely missed. (Alan)

murdercontestzine@hotmail.com for details

My True Love #1

A4/ B&W/ Copied/ 40 pages/ £1.50

Shit this kid is enthusiastic about *everything* hardcore. It's awesome! Interviews with Terror, Good Clean Fun, The Break In, The Down And Outs/ Seconds Out and the Permanent. Thankfully the zine doesn't just stick to the tired old 'how'd you form, what's the new record like, etc' style questions that zinesters tend to employ. Instead you have Duggan from The Break In being asked 'Does down tuning your guitar make you a metal band and are you all just hoping on this metal-core band wagon thing?' and Scott from Terror being asked 'Was it always your intention to leave Bridge9 as soon as a more mainstream label like Trustkill offered you more money?' Much more originally questions than you normally get faced with. On top of that you've got the obligatory reviewage, and a couple of articles.
notxforxme@hotmail.com

Pick Your Poison #4

A5/ B&W/ Copied/ 60 pages/ \$3

This is a zine about a kid working crappy jobs, and living the life of the slacker. It's

a fairly hum-drum situation comical, the whole zine bounces from one laugh to another. Put it this way, despite being 60 pages this was so enjoyable that I read it all in one sitting.

pickyourpoison@beer.com /
pickyourpoison.net

Punk Planet #63

A4/ B&W/ Printed/ 154 pages/ £4.00

So Punk Planet seemed to disappear for two issues, or at least #61 and #62 didn't make it to this country. I'll ignore it because this is — as usual — a fucking amazing issue of PP. One of the most interesting bits of the zine is the re-prints of blogs from Iraqis documenting their day to day lives during their occupation. The article on immigration, and then the photo diary of the 'Gateway to the North' make for compelling reading, as does the piece about a boy trying to deal with his anorexia. On the other hand the interviews with bands are ever so slightly dull, though the interview with Post-Punk Kitchen (A vegan TV show) was pretty cool. Worth the £4 if you can find it in a store.
punkplanet.com

Play Dead #11

A5/ B&W/ Printed/ 64 pages/ Free

I kinda find it interesting that one of the leading articles is promoting the same thing as the back-page ad. It's good to see that marketing schemes are alive and well in punk rock. There's a good interview with Humanfly in here and uhh that's about it. There seems to be a tendency to not complain about shit just because it's free, which is a pretty lame way of going about stuff. This zine may be free, but it's pretty uninteresting to read.

Razorcake #21

A4/ B&W/ Printed/ 120 pages/ £3.50

You know I don't really get why lots of people dig this zine. I appreciate that I don't like much of the music that the kids who put this together do, but then again Punk Planet and

Fanzine Reviews

me don't really gel musically but is still one of my favourite zines. Razorcake always feels like it's almost more advert than content, which is unfair since it's not true, but feels like it is because of the fact that they place their ads all around their articles, interviews and reviews. Equally the columns tend to just leave me a bit bored. I mean really I don't give a shit what a member of the American Navy thinks of Abu Ghraib. Actually having just said that both Jennifer Whiteford and Sean Carswell's columns were good this issue. Maybe I'm just prejudice cause it doesn't come from the East Bay or Portland. There's a lot of time put into this so maybe you should check it out and decide for yourself.

Razorcake, Po Box 42129, LA, CA 90042

Reflections #15

A4/ B&W/ Printed/ 86 pages/ £7

It's been ages coming, and now it's finally here, and it's been well worth the wait. Interviews with lots of awesome hardcore bands (Converge, GUTG, Terror, Count Me Out, Striking Distance etc etc), lots of interesting articles and a review section (which wasn't as good as the rest of the zine but still cool) all makes for a good zine. I think it's pretty cheap to get – I picked mine up for a £1 – so go and try and find it! reflectionsrecords.com

Remains of a Caveman/ Go Large

A5/B&W/Copied/50 pages/£?

Split fanzine offerings from some Shirley Punx. Adam's section is more like a standard zine with articles, fanzine reviews, oddities, thoughts, loves lost bitter ramblings, a history of the Shirley Punx down in Southampton, and a really rad account of his time travelling in Scandinavia. Ross' section is quite intensely laid out with a series of passport sized photos as the backing sheet for each page with cut and paste text boxes overlaid. It's not the most appealing layout or easy to read but it is fairly

Scared To Death #2

A5/ B&W/ Printed/ 32 pages/ £1

I haven't had a chance to read the whole of this issue, but issue one was absolutely killer and this issue doesn't look like it will be any less amazing. Scared to Death is a fanzine dedicated to horror, past, present and future. In my book that's a fucking rad topic to be writing about. On top of that the kids who write this know their stuff. A good read.

Shadow Play #7.5

A5/ B&W/ Copied/ 8 pages/ free

This is basically an 8 page review, from several different people, on Michael Moore's Fahrenheit 9/11. It was cool to see that other people thought the movie was a pile of crap as well. I like the idea of doing a fanzine solely based on a review of something. Though it is just a series of rants, it just works cause it's a quick read. Well worth getting hold of.

alexowl26@hotmail.com

Shadowplay #11

A5/ B&W/ Copied/ 20 pages/ Free

Shadowplay is a zine about reviews, with a traditional focus on live reviews. Live reviews tend to suck, because they tend to say 'Band A was good, Band B was bad', that's why you won't find a live review section in here. Shadowplay are good at writing live reviews, and clearly put a lot of time into writing them. There's also a brief interview and a couple rants. It's a good read, plus as an added bonus it's free with an SAE.

alexowl26@hotmail.com

Shirley Punks On Hope #1/ Facial Disobedience #2

A5/ B&W/ Copied/ 40 pages/ £0.30

This may be all sold out by now, but you should still definitely get in touch just in case there are a couple left, or to see if new things have come out because this is fucking rad. A split zine with two clearly different personalities and writing styles. On the one

A Short Fanzine about Rocking #10

A5/ B&W/ Printed/ 60 pages/ £1.50

OK bands interviewed in this issue are The Bled, Dillinger Escape Plan, Paint The Town Red, One Line Drawing, Echo Freddy, The Blood Brothers, Stories And Comets, Modern Life Is War, Bad Religion, Alexisonfire. I list the bands in a vague attempt at being objective cause I don't really like any of the bands so I'm not really in any position to be reviewing their interviews. So yeah make your own mind up about it. The interview answers that I've read are pretty interesting, and the layout's really nice, so yeah I think it's probably worth picking this up if this is your taste in music!

fanzine_uk@talk21.com

Turbocore Zine #2

A4/ B&W/ Copied/ 4 pages/ Free

A small free zine from the Philippines. It's got two interviews – one with Organ Grinder of France, and one with a Serbian zine called akupuntura. There's also a couple of rants about the state of affairs in the Philippines. It's a nice effort, though personally I wouldn't mind seeing some more info about the Philippines just cause I'm ignorant about the situation over there.

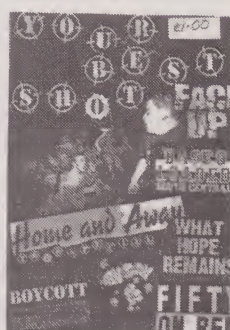
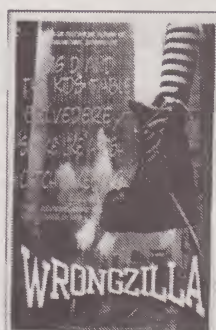
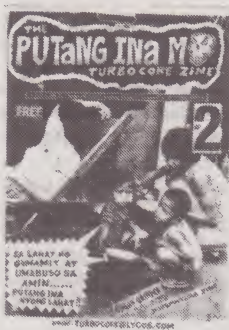
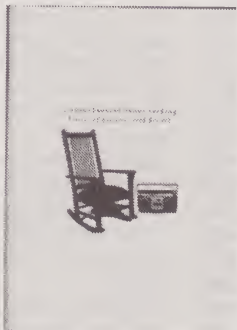
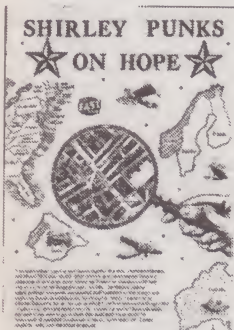
turbocore@lycos.com

Wrongzilla #?

A5/ B&W/ Printed/ 32 pages/ £1.00 (?)

So definitely not a fanzine for the PC punks. Silly comments and stupid pictures abound. I'm not sure any of them are actually meant intentionally, but I kinda think the author should maybe think about how his target might react to some of the shit he's writing before he says it. Ignoring this there are some kinda enjoyable live reviews, interviews, and articles, even if they are all of a slightly childish disposition!

unclemonkey@supanet.com



interesting. Taking recounting tales from a year spent 'Down Under' as a loose theme, interspersed with any other ramblings and thoughts that come to mind seems to have been the main object of this part. Even if it is incredibly unstructured and random its full of honesty and passion and is dead cool. (Natalie)

16 Brangwyn Drive, Patcham, Brighton, East Sussex, BN1 8XD/
stecollective@hotmail.com

side (Shirley Punks on Hope) is – broadly speaking – all about the guys travels and major life experiences, written in a strange stop start faux-poetry manner. I initially thought it would be impossible to read, but actually found myself feeling sad by the end of his half. The other half is written by Phil from Pilger, and is full of random thoughts about work, travels, life and seasons. It's the better and more fluid read of the two, but only marginally.

Jamie, 56 Sutherland Road, Lordshill, Southampton, SO18 8GE

Your Best Shot #1

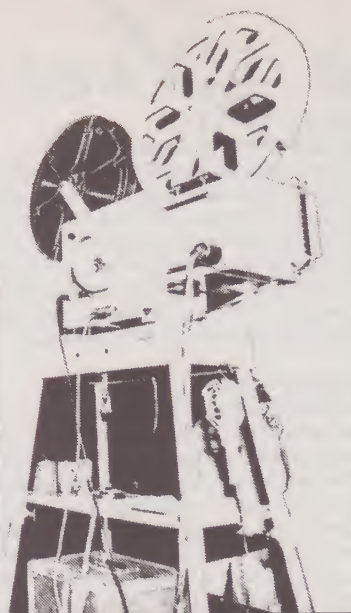
A5/ B&W/ Copied/ 24 pages/ £1.00

A hardcore zine by numbers. Interviews with Face Up, Bases Loaded, What Hope Remains, Fifty on Red. They're all asked fairly similar questions, though most of them come out with interesting answers. There's a completely fucked up short story (not in a good way) which kinda tarnishes the whole thing, but other than that it's quite cool.

fantabulous_hullballooo@hotmail.com

Movie Reviews

We've started to get sent a few DVDs recently so figured we may as well review them. This'll hopefully be a regular thing so send movies for review to the Po Box address. Just to warn we're not going to bother to review bands 'home video' DVDs cause for the most part they're lame. Beyond that we'll review anything so long as it has something to do with punk, politics or alternative lifestyles.



Captain Everything - Live at the Underworld Punkervision

I've never seen a "proper" video of a show that I was actually in attendance of so this was a new experience. I remember thinking it was kind of odd having a punk show being filmed from five different angles at the time they were videoing it, and I don't know, it still kind of feels a bit odd now. Ignoring the film makers desire to keep flicking from one camera angle to another you realize you're watching a masterpiece. So sure most people seem to be under the illusion that Captain Everything are some generic pop-punk band. These people are wrong and very stupid. Captain Everything are genius. Sure they fool the kids with their saccharine sweet lyrics, but with their warp speed drumming and complex riffs they don't hide it too much that they're one of the best bands to have ever existed. Even better than how good the band is, is Lewis and Jon's onstage/ between song banter. To top it all off you get to laugh at the drunk morons that get on the stage just as the band finish their song and then get ridiculed for the next thirty seconds. Seriously you're lame if you don't like this band. You are uber lame if you like Captain Everything and don't buy this DVD. The only way this could have been better is if the band played their 'secret song'. (edd)

The Exploited - Beat 'em All Dreamcatcher

I couldn't actually sit through this entire thing. Sure, i was really busy, but i just plain don't like (or 'get') The Exploited. They are one of those bands that really make you despair over the downward spiral of what constitutes 'good music'. O.K, that aside, there's loads of 'goodies'- interviews, biography, etc. And, although the live show is pretty uninspiring (it all looks the same to me!) the footage is pretty cool, a deviation from the standard sketchy recordings of live punk bands. Forgetting the bad hair cuts and the fact I can't understand a word the singer is saying, the good thing about the live shows is that they are fast.. Another creepy thing is that the entire audience seem to look like clones of each other. The interview is just too funny to be able to describe in words. For example,

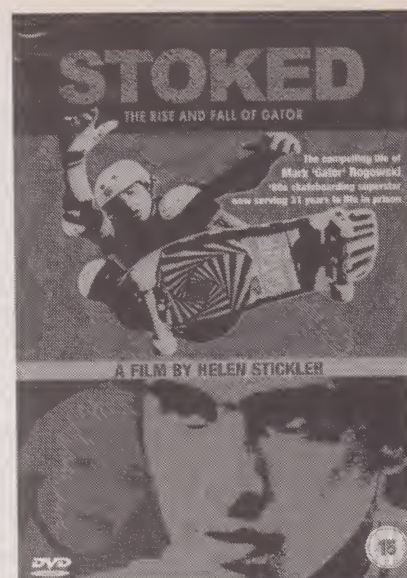
interviewer, 'what is punk rock?', Guy from Exploited; (blank facial expression) 'A type of music created in the 70s' (Dead Silence, more blank looks). Not only is it really badly edited and every loud noise is like a drill to the brain, but the, like, guys, like, are just, like, plain boring... and, like, dumb! But hell, what do I know?! Only people from the working class get what it's all about...Right?! (12o5)

Hellfest Vol III High Roller Studios Doug Spangenberg

You know what I learnt from watching this 'documentary'? That Hellfest is really fucking lame. Over two discs there are all of six good bands (out of 36). The venue where the festival happens is hardly 'intimate', and everyone in the crowd looks like a fucking arsehole, a fact reinforced when you watch the 'interviews' with crowd members in the extras bit. From a cinematography point of view the 'documentary' is equally heinous, with someone getting way too fucking happy with their six camera angles and someone clearly dropping speed when they were cutting it all up in the editing suite. Even if you really dig the bands that are on here I can't see you getting over excited by this. Watching six different angles of Walls of Jericho in the space of thirty seconds just made me want to listen to their album, rather than getting a headache from trying to watch them perform one of their weaker songs. There were a couple of comedy moments, largely because American kids (or at least American kids who go to Hellfest) can't stage dive, so there was some strange pleasure to be had watching these monkeys just head long into empty space. Unfortunately of course the camera couldn't actually stay at one angle for longer than ten seconds so you just had to make up the landing. (bob) Lumberjack distribution

Stoked: The Rise and Fall of Gator Palm Pictures Helen Stickler

For those who don't know Mark 'Gator' Rogowski was one of the rock stars of skateboarding when it blew up. He was the



vert king, he had balls of steel, and an ego to match it. His board - which he made for Vision - was the board that every kid wanted in the 80s. And then vert stopped being cool; it was street that everyone wanted to watch and do (because you could do it wherever you wanted). Gator couldn't skate street for shit (his attempts at it are one of the funniest parts of this movie), and he quickly lost his prestige. He pretty much jumped off the deep end, became a Christian fundamentalist, and then raped and murdered his ex-girlfriend's best friend, propelling him into the limelight once again for something completely removed from his skateboarding ability.

The documentary doesn't just take the usual simplistic road that many 'this man was a hero, now he's a murderer' documentaries take. It explores what it was like for a professional skateboarder in the 80s by interviewing Gator's peers. Hawk, Caballero, Jesse, Mountain are all interviewed about what it was like to suddenly go from skating just for the love of it with your friends, to being propelled into being every suburban kids' idol. It interviews the kids - such as Olson - who went onto become professional skaters themselves about how they regarded Gator and his contemporaries. It explores how big business (specifically Vision) warped the original skate ideals, and turned it's aesthetics into big bucks. In other words it's a documentary about the 80s skate scene, just as much as it's a documentary about Gator.

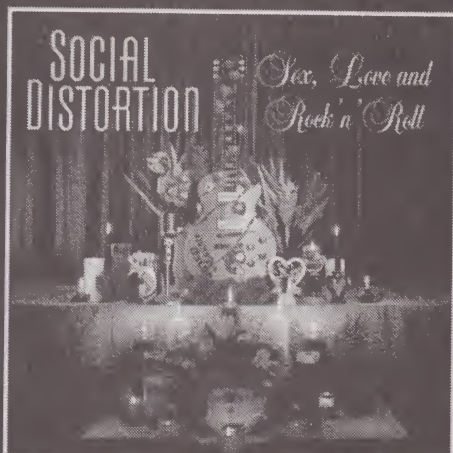
It also finds the time to interview friends, and specifically his ex-girlfriend, of Gator about his personality, and mood during the period. It's backed up with an awesome sound track of 80s punk tunes, and amazing skate footage.

I kinda expected for the film to lag in the middle but thanks to a really good editing job, and a good use of library footage, the documentary never stops moving for more than a couple of minutes. The only negative point I could pick up on during the whole documentary is that I really didn't feel much empathy/ sympathy for Gator's ex-girlfriend - she's just really annoying! (edd)

Hey! Tell us whether having dvd/ movie reviews is a good or a bad idea. We're still split on the idea. Email us or something.

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Comic Reviews

Bear #5

Jamie Smart

Slave Labor/ £2.50

Bizarrely issue number five is Bear's final outing. Oh well perhaps Jamie Smart is trying to counteract the idea that comic series should either be three, four or six issues in length. Anyhow! Bear is the tale of a walking, talking stuffed teddy bear, his arch nemesis/ best friend Looshkin, a cat, and his owner Karl. The general premise is that Bear is a long suffering kind soul, with a murderous cat, and completely fucked up owner to keep him company. It sounds better as an idea than it actually is when it's transferred to paper. For the most part the jokes are fairly non-joke like, and the supposed humour comes more from the obviousness of the given situation rather than for any real comedy! All the same it's kinda fun, in a totally childish sort of way and if you were a fan of Tom and Jerry then you'll probably dig this. (edd)

www.slavelaborgraphics.com

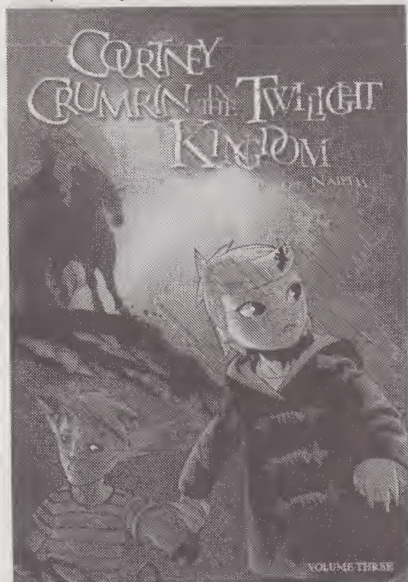
Courtney Crumrin in the Twilight Kingdom

Ted Naifeh

Oni Press/ £7.50

Courtney Crumrin keeps getting better and better. This is the third collection, collecting the four issues that made up the Twilight Kingdom series. It's fucking amazing. So amazing in fact that I'm not sure I can review it - but I'll give it a go.

Let's start with the basics. Courtney Crumrin is a teenage girl, a loner, and to add insult to injury also 'blessed' with [black] magical powers that even she doesn't fully understand. Thankfully there isn't any 'Sabrina the Teenage Witch' or 'Buffy the Vampire Slayer' two dimensional character



development here, Courtney feels as though Naifeh has managed to magically film a real person and then transpose that film into graphic novel form. Equally the world she inhabits is every bit as realistic as say Tolkien's 'Middle Earth' or Pratchett's 'Disc World' thanks to the fact that it's based on contemporary society but with a mystical twist.

This arc of Courtney Crumrin circles around Courtney joining a Saturday school that teaches the history of the Coven that she's part of. At this new school she meets other witches and wizards, who she quickly works out are as dumb as the kids at school. The plot really kicks off when one of her class mates decides to put a curse on his younger brother turning him slowly into a night thing. The only way to stop that from happening is to go into Goblin Town, which only Courtney knows how to navigate. Naifeh develops an intricate plot, where you're deliberately left wondering who the good guys, and bad guys are and whether Courtney really is leading the rest of her class to safety. Just to add to the mix there's also the odd dig at modern society, which is always a welcome addition!

Ted Naifeh's artwork should also be mentioned at this point, as it is some of the best ink work you're going to find in the comic book world at the moment. Though he uses his lines sparingly he's still able to create intricate, elaborate and realistic scenes. To repeat what I said earlier this comic is fucking amazing. The best thing I've read in a long, long time. (edd)

www.onipress.com / tednaifeh.com

The Fixer – A Story from Sarajevo

Joe Sacco

Jonathan Cape/ Steal it

The fixer follows Sacco fairly standard format. Go to war zone, write briefly about why people are shooting at each other, then write about your day to day life living there. 'The Fixer' charts slightly different territory since this time Sacco has a character to focus on, 'the fixer', otherwise Neven. Sacco uses Neven to articulate the war in Sarajevo, as much as it's possible to describe such a fucked up conflict. To the comic's credit 'The Fixer' manages to express this almost perfectly, about how friends are fighting friends, no one knows who they're fighting for, or whether they are the 'aggressor' or the 'peace keeper'. Sacco's familiar ink work works perfectly to describe the stupidity of the conflict, and more specifically about how Neven survived it, and is still continuing to survive it. Neven – as the title of the comic implies is a 'fixer'. He is approached by journalists to make contact with people that the journalist would

otherwise not be able to find. During the conflict this paid good money. Before being a fixer he fought in the conflict for one of the warlords. Most of the comic is spent trying to work out exactly what Neven did actually do, since his story, and the stories that others tell about him don't always match up. This is a slight problem with 'The Fixer', cause you get confused. I mean the whole Sarajevo conflict was confusing enough as it was, to then try and work out the lies from the truth leaves you a bit lost at times. Equally though part of the comics charms lies in what the fuck is going on, and trying to work out the human feelings that pepper every conflict.

This is certainly not another 'Palestine' – Sacco's most famous and most impressive graphic novel – but it is well worth reading, and a good stop-gap before his graphic novel documenting the Second Intifada is released. (bob)

www.randomhouse.co.uk

Gloom Cookie - Broken Curses

Serena Valentino / Breehn Burns

Slave Labor Graphics/ £9.99

Gloom Cookie definitely works best in graphic novel form. I often find it hard keeping up with all the plot developments when I read it in individual comic book form, there's too much going on for me to be able from one month to the next, so I always enjoy reading the graphic novel purely because it all becomes clear. So most of you have probably already heard of Gloom Cookie, I mean - despite it being a completely different style of comic - tends to be mentioned in the same breath as Johnny the Homicidal Maniac, Squee and Lenore. In other words it's one of the Slave Labor heavy hitters. I never really used to think that it deserved this accolade, it always felt convoluted and too wordy (not that JHTM isn't but we'll ignore that for now). I've certainly reaped rewards from persisting with the series. It's by no means my favourite comic book series, but it's certainly well worth a read. This third story arc - where things start to get explained a little more - is my favourite of the three collected books so far, but in fairness you need to start from the start to have any hope of understanding what's going on! (bob)

Morgenmuffel - Collected issues

Isy

Active Distro/ £1

As I went to review this I realised that I'd lent my copy who'd gone off travelling to Spain. This proves how good this is because I never lend things to people that I don't think are amazing it also means I can't really properly review it, so regard this as a name drop! For those of you that haven't had the fun of reading Morgenmuffel it's about the life of a Brighton based punk rock anarchist kid who somehow I managed to convince to write a column for this crappy fanzine. Seriously this is awesome, even the magical bit where the photocopier's turned two of the pages upside down, and it's so cheap (£1!) I would expect this to sell out immediately so order them quickly... (edd)

There is a chill in the air. Our glorious planetary summer is over. The gift of nature has turned into the tragedy of the global commons. For thousands of years we have thought of history as linear progress. We took it for granted that each generation would be better off than the last. But now we've reached a turning point. Autumn is upon us.



LINKS for further info.

Distributors for information and music

Active Distribution - BM Active, London, WC1N 3XX - activedistribution.org * AK Distribution - Po Box 12766, Edinburgh, EH8 9YE - akpress.org * CrimethInc - 2695 Rangewood Drive, Atlanta, GA. 30345, USA - crimethinc.com * Dead & Gone Records - 42 Glover Road, Totley, Sheffield, S17 4HN - deadandgone.co.uk * Do The Dog Records - 26a Craven Road, Newbury, Berkshire, RG14 5NE * Freedom Press - 84b Whitechapel High Street, London, E1 7QX - ecm.org/freedom * Microcosm Distro - Po Box 14332, Portland, OR 97293, USA - microcosmpublishing.com * Punkermentality - punkermentality.com * Town Clock Recordz - 39 Station Road, Thirsk, YO7 1QH - smallsailor@another.co.uk

Record Stores

All Ages Records, London * Out Of Step Records, Leeds * Punker Bunker, Brighton * Roadkill Records, Manchester * Tempest Records, Birmingham * Beggars Banquet, Kingston

Websites

Collective Zine - collectivezine.org * Eroding Empire - eroding.org.uk * Punk news - punknews.org.uk * Punktastic - punktastic.com * Rancid News - rnzine.co.uk * YoLondon - yolondon.net

Zines & Publications

Artcore - 1 Aberdulais, Gabalfa, Cardiff, CF14 2PH - artcore@ntlworld.com * Black Flag - BM Hurricane, WC1N 3XX - flag.blackened.net/blackflag * Courage To Care - kitty_core@hotmail.com * Ecologist - Unit 18, 15 Lots Road, London, SW10 0QJ - theecologist.org * Green Anarchy - Po Box 11331, Eugene, OR 97440, USA - greenanarchy.org * Maximum Rock N Roll - Po Box 460760, SF, CA 94146-0760 USA - maximumrocknroll.com * Mass Movement - mmzine.co.uk * Murder Contest - 43 Harold View, Leeds, LS6 1PP * Punk Planet - 4229 N. Honore, Chicago, IL 60613, USA - punkplanet.com * Slug N Lettuce - Po Box 26632, Richmond, VA 23261-6632, USA * SchNews - Po Box 2600, Brighton, BN2 2DX - schnews.org.uk



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